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THE KEATSIAN CONCEPTION OF ART: A RE-INTERPRETATION

by

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AGWONOROBO ENAEME ERUVBETINE

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ABSTRACT

A review of studies of John Keats's works shows that, while his reputation as a great poet is well-established, there is still much uncertainty about the nature of his achievement as a literary critic. Most critics who grant the profundity and penetration of his scattered critical statements are usually reluctant to acknowledge him as a literary critic because they feel that his critical ideas are more relevant to the determination of his own achievement as a poet. Moreover, his "indebtedness" to Hazlitt, the supposed scantiness of his critical materials, and the informality of his criticism are seen by various critics as justifications for denying him an independent place in the history of literary criticism.

This study, therefore, attempts to reconstruct Keats's critical ideas and integrated aesthetic vision from the sporadic, fragmentary and detached statements about poetry (or art) and poets (or artists) which abound in his poems, letters, and miscellaneous prose because it is believed that his remarks on the nature and meaning of art, in spite of their informality, contain a unified artistic vision, "add up to a considerable body of criticism," and justify according serious attention to him as a literary critic. The study also tries to elucidate the cardinal notions in Keats's poetics (notions such as Negative Capability,

Poetical Character, Intensity, Poetic Imagination and Essential Beauty) and establish their coherence, as a means of resolving most of the supposed contradictions in Keats's critical thought.

In reconstructing and interpreting Keats's views on art, this study also strives to demonstrate how Keats's distinctive brand of Romantic aesthetics evolves from his commitment to poetry that "has a direct applicability to human life." His speculations on Soul-making and the Chambers of the human mind are considered to be the foundation upon which the Keatsian poetics of the interdependence of art and life is built. The quest of the "Intelligence" for personal Identity or Soul-state is shown as symbolizing simultaneously man's search for a mature understanding of himself and his world, and the poet's quest for mature poetic insight--making the nature and goal of art and life coterminous. Since art and life subsume one another in Keats's system, the intimate knowledge of, and participation in the aesthetic ideal of beauty in all things become the ultimate goal of art and life. Dramatic capability, empathic alertness, imaginative maturity, and intense sensuousness are, for Keats, qualities of lives and works (artistic or otherwise) of persons who live poetic lives--lives and works that reflect the aesthetic ideal of beauty in all things. Hence, the attributes of those who have attained the aesthetic ideal and the qualities of their works serve as the ideal standards by which Keats judges the lives and works of poets, including his own life and poetic creations.

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INTRODUCTION

1

Much work has already been done in the interpretation and assessment of the critical views of John Keats. Although this work has led to a general acknowledgement of the importance of his insights, his position in the history of literary criticism remains somewhat indeterminate. His death at an early age, coupled with the fact that he was not a systematic critic, seems to be responsible for much of the uncertainty surrounding his achievement as a literary critic. For instance, T. S. Eliot's laudatory comment on the significance of Keats's ideas--particularly his conception of "Negative Capability"--contains an unmistakable reservation regarding the poet's tentativeness and immaturity.[1] Moreover, although W. J. Bate considers some of Keats's critical statements worthy of a place in his *Criticism: The Major Texts*, he implicitly questions their originality and worth when he maintains that their "values appear as a gifted extension and development of Hazlitt."[2] And while René Wellek acknowledges the relevance of Keats's remarks to an understanding of Romantic Criticism, he stops short of granting Keats an independent place in his *A History of Modern Criticism* when he avers that "In the history of criticism, John Keats (1795-1821) must be dealt with in an appendix to Hazlitt" because "his central views on poetry are in complete agreement with those of Hazlitt."[3]

The serious student of Keats must be wary of the unwillingness of many critics to grant the poet an independent position as a critic. For example, the similarities in the opinions of Keats and Hazlitt alone cannot fully account for Wellek's consideration of Keats's notions as adjuncts to those of Hazlitt. Implicit in his discussion is the assumption that, compared with Hazlitt, Keats was too young to be the source of the ideas expressed in his works and those of Hazlitt, even though Wellek is not unaware of the eighteenth-century origin of many of the ideas and of Hazlitt's eclecticism.[4] While it may be true that "the resemblance between the views of Keats and those of Hazlitt has been due not merely to parallel thinking on the subject but to the direct influence of Hazlitt's writings on the poet's mind,"[5] the mere fact of an influence is less significant than its effect because Hunt, Haydon, and Wordsworth, among others, exerted direct influence on Keats at various stages of his development as poet and critic. Haydon and Hunt may be regarded as minor influences but Wordsworth is a major factor in the growth of Keats's poetic and critical sensibilities.[6] In fact, "verbal echoes"[7] of Wordsworth's artistic theories in the work of Keats are as many as those of Hazlitt, all of which coexist with echoes of Milton and Shakespeare.[8]

The sources from which Keats drew his intellectual and artistic nourishment are so many that any attempt to single out one source is risky. Even some of the views he shares with Hazlitt and others can be viewed correctly as common to his age. As Caldwell rightly suggests, "To ascribe Keats's dominant image of the Poet, rapt by the charms of nature into a wild and visionary trance pregnant of mythological lore or the wisdom of the spheres, to Hunt, Wordsworth, or any other specific source of literature is neither necessary nor warranted. These conventions were in the air, and have been for a hundred years. The distinctive fact with Keats is that they were not mere conventions."[9] Since he "was not a slavish imitator,"[10] his reactions to Hazlitt's speculations (like his responses to other sources) were idiosyncratic. He usually tests all the ideas he receives on his pulses before accepting, rejecting, or adapting them to his distinctive framework of convictions. Many of his opinions may "have originated from Hazlitt's essays"[11] but, as Kenneth Muir contends, "nothing demonstrates the independence of Keats's mind better than the way he refined on Hazlitt's stimulating but cruder theories."[12]

In his attempt to justify his denial of an independent place to Keats in his A History of Modern Criticism, Wellek also remarks on the scantiness and the unorthodox nature of

Keats's critical materials. He maintains that "Keats wrote one review, published criticism of two performances of Kean, left some marginalia in copies of Milton, Shakespeare and Burton, and pronounced on poetry and poets in his letters."[13] In this statement, Wellek cites only the prose writings of Keats in support of his belief in the paucity of Keats's critical materials despite his awareness of the relevance of Keats's poems to his critical views. Interestingly though, Wellek draws upon some of the poems in his attempts to explain Keats's critical statements, thereby conceding the indispensability of the poems to a valid assessment of the Keatsian conception of art. Keats may not have written "professional essays" as Hazlitt did, but his poems and prose statements form a fairly sizeable body of critical material.

The significance of the poems to an understanding of Keats's views on art cannot be over-emphasized because, as Mario L. D'Avanzo observes, "concerns ordinarily amplified in prose literary criticism become a central subject for Romantic poetry, for the poet in this period is essentially a maker rather than a critic."[14] Trawick makes a similar point when he remarks that "The Romantics wrote more poems about poetry and poets (including themselves) than any comparable groups in English Literature because they considered the poetic experience the highest activity of the human mind."[15] In fact, Keats, more than any other

Romantic poet, conceives of poetry as an invaluable vehicle for the exploration of the nature of poetic creativity because of what Brandes calls "Keats's general poetical indifference to untested theories and principles of art."[16] Like most other Romantics, Keats would have enthusiatically agreed with Wallace Stevens's dictum: "Poetry is the subject of the poem."[17] Therefore, his poems "may be rewardingly interpreted beyond their literal meaning as figurative statements on the activity of the imagination wherein poetry is born"[18] and read as figurative representations of the nature of art.

Critics, aware of the fact that most of Keats's poems symbolically explore the nature of art, strive to identify and examine particular poems that deal with poetic theory. For instance, C. D. Thorpe suggests that seven out of the thirteen poems in the 1817 volume of Keats's poems exploit poetic theory;[19] A. C. Bradley maintains that "*Endymion* symbolizes or allegorises the pursuit of the principle of beauty by the poetic soul";[20] Douglas Bush asserts that Keats's attack "on cold philosophy in *Lamia* certainly belongs to the realm of poetic theory";[21] and Cleanth Brooks believes that "the 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' is obviously intended to be a parable on the nature of poetry and art in general."[22] Apart from these suggestions of the thematic rendering of poetic theory by means of symbolic structures in Keats's poems, there are poetic depictions of artistic forms like those found in the epistle "To Charles Cowden Clarke":

> . . . the sweets of song:
> The grand, the sweet, the terse, the free, the fine;
> What swell'd with pathos, and what right divine:
> Spenserian vowels that elope with ease,
> And float along like birds o'er summer seas:
> Miltonic storms, and more, Miltonic tenderness;
> . . . .
> . . . the sonnet swelling loudly
> Up to the climax and then dying proudly?
> . . . the grandeur of the ode,
> Growing like Atlas, stronger from its load?
> . . . taste the more than cordial dram,
> The sharp, rapier-pointed epigram?
> . . . that epic was of all king,
> Round, vast, and spanning all like Saturn's ring?
> (53-58; 60-67)

Keats's characteristic approach to criticism is essentially imaginative, not rationalistic or theoretical. Such poetic statements on the principles of art as are cited above, augment the symbolic structures with which Keats explores the nature of art in his poems.

In Keatsian studies, therefore, the poems and the prose writings constitute a broadened base that facilitates an understanding of the unified critical vision underlying Keats's critical remarks. In interpreting and assessing Keats's poetics on the basis of this broadened outlook, critics invariably encounter the question of how the poet's conception of art affects his creativity, or the issue of the interrelationship between the poet and critic in Keats. Answers to this question fall into two main categories; the first of which centres on the suggestion that "Keats practised what he preached"[23] while the second asserts that there is some incongruity between Keats's theories and his poetic practice.

In the first category, parallels are usually established between the evolution of the poet's ideas and his poetic practice. Since his critical views are believed to be fundamental to the writing of his poems, attempts are made to reveal ideas that inform particular poems. Also, the ideas underlying the early poems are compared with those informing the later ones. Sometimes, especially when the entire corpus of Keats's works is the main concern, no changes are said to have taken place between his early and later views on the principles of art. But often, when particular poems become the main focus of interest, some major changes are noted. The significance of such changes is, however, regarded as minimal since the changes are considered to be no more "than the characteristic revisions of the formative ideals of art through the gradual ripening of Keats's intellect."[24] Hence, the formative ideals of Keats's art are hailed as mature both in their formulation in the letters and in their reflection in the poems, especially in the later poems.

In the second category, however, Keats's development as a poet and as a critic is often viewed as uneven. G. R. Elliot, for instance, remarks that "Keats's critical intellect developed towards the poetry of our 'higher thoughts' but away from the 'shaping spirit of the imagination.'"[25] His critical pronouncements are, at their best, said to be more profound than his poetry. T. S. Eliot makes this point while commenting on Keats's assessment of Hazlitt's criticism of Wordsworth's "Gipsies" when he claims that what Keats said was "truer for greater and more mature poetry than anything that he ever wrote."[26] Furthermore, F. R. Leavis believes that Keats's critical statements are often more mature than his poetry. He states that "Keats's art does not tap the vigour either of his aestheticism or of the more serious interests, the maturer moral life revealed to us in the letters; no rich sap flows."[27] Hence, in this category, Keats's maturity is seen only in his aesthetic views and not in his poetry.

Most of the views expressed in the two approaches to the determination of the interrelation of the poet and critic in Keats thus agree on the profundity of the best of Keats's artistic notions. While opinions in the first approach relate Keats's maturity as a critic to his maturity as a poet, views in the second approach consider it unnecessary to relate the critical notions to his poetry because such views do not recognize the maturity of Keats's art--even in the later poems.

The general acknowledgement of the profundity of Keats's artistic discernments notwithstanding, many critics are still hesitant about granting Keats an independent position in the history of literary criticism because of the popularity, in Keatsian scholarship, of a commonly accepted but dubious view of the nature of Keats's artistic and intellectual evolution. This view which stems from the tendency to trace the development of Keats by means of "a chronological examination of his poetry in the order of its composition and of his letters in relation to his poetry"[28] is variously expressed as Keats's "steady unswerving progress from sensuousness to spiritual love of beauty,"[29] "from sensationalism to vision, from idealization to idealism,"[30] and "from sensuousness to humanitarian concern."[31] Keats's career is, therefore, divided into two main phases: the early phase of effeminacy and immaturity, and the later one of masculinity and humanitarian concern.

Passages from "Sleep and Poetry," a poem which most critics consider to be Keats's poetic manifesto, have been cited by some critics to illustrate both stages. The sensuous stage is said, in fact, to be described by Keats himself:

> First the realm I'll pass
> Of Flora, and old Pan; sleep in the grass,
> Feed upon apples red, and strawberries,
> And choose each pleasure that my fancy sees;
> Catch the white-handed nymphs in the shady places,
> To woo sweet kisses from averted faces,--
> Play with their fingers, touch their shoulders white
> Into pretty shrinking with a bite
> As hard as lips can make it: till agreed,
> A lovely tale of human life we'll read. (101-110)

And the mature stage of humanitarian concern is said to be foreshadowed in Keats's desire to depict themes related to human agonies:

> And can I ever bid these joys farewell?
> Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,
> Where I may find the agonies, the strife
> Of human hearts.... (122-5)

Other than these two main stages, some critics[32] also suggest a transitional stage. However, this transitional stage is frequently considered to be of little importance because the main emphasis is placed on the difference between the main stages. The early poems are usually classified under the period of immaturity while the later ones are alleged to be mature. His poems are therefore seen as representing his progress from sheer sentimentality to humanitarianism.

Keats's nature is also believed to have influenced the evolution of his poetry and ideas through these two stages. The attributes that are claimed to have affected his critical and poetic progress towards the mature ideal have been identified by Bate as "his intense sensuousness and hard core of commonsense."[33] Just as his early poems seem to portray "a world peopled by flowers and the scent of flowers, or men and women whose nature was of flowers and scents,"[34] so also is his early conception of art believed to be based on "a sybaritic theory of poetry"[35] that is seen as a mere justification for the youthful romances he created. And just as the later poems are regarded as representing a profound vision of human life, so also are his later theories seen as reflections of his mature vision.

Essentially, there is a tacit acceptance by many critics of the view that each element of Keats's nature is predominant in his art and criticism at a particular stage of his two-stage development.

The stimulation of Keats's sensibilities by the authors he either read or associated with in the course of his career is often introduced in support of the two-stage theory of progressive development. The flowering of Keats "as a young man in love with love and nature,"[36] as portrayed in the early poems, is related to the influence of Hunt and Spenser, while the maturity of his genius, associated with his achievements in the later poems, is attributed to Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth. His critical ideas are likewise supposed to be nourished by various writers, especially Hazlitt.[37] These influences are similarly made to fit into a pattern in which those who apparently fostered his sensuous attributes are shown to be inferior to those who nourished his robust vision. Hence, those critics who believe in the two-stage theory of the maturing of Keats's poetry and critical thought insist that his greatness hinges on his outgrowing or rejecting such influences as promoted the sentimental qualities of his nature.

The two-stage theory has led to an unfortunate exaggeration of the feeble qualities of Keats's early poems and, implicitly, the censure of the aesthetic ideas that guided the poet in their production. Thus, it is common practice in Keatsian studies to relegate the early works to the background in order to emphasize the greatness of the later ones. For example, MacGillivray's consideration of the 1817 poems as instances of "adolescent mawkishness, awkward phrases, false rhymes, a tendency towards gushing about delight of 'poesy,' a frequent quasi-elegance of phrase, an occasional vulgarity and lack of an air of graceful detachment,"[38] is an exaggerated half-truth that is aimed at separating the early from the later works as a means of establishing the two-stage developmental theory. That modern studies of the works of Keats still put much accent on such negative assessments of the early poems as are reminiscent of the Blackwood's Magazine's hostilities towards Keats shows that there is a continued tendency to base Keats's fame on the later poems alone. Thus, Caldwell's assertion that "It took criticism a century to decide that Keats has any mind worth mentioning, that he was not a purely sensuous man and that long study of his philosophy has laid forever the ghost of the purely sensuous Keats incapable of cerebration,"[39] sounds more wishful than real because the ghost of the purely sensuous Keats still haunts criticism in a more subtle manner. To lay the ghost to rest effectively, the early creative and critical works must be accepted as positive components in an inclusive picture of Keats's achievements. As Roger Sharrock says, in spite of his opposition to viewing Keats as a mature poet, "A maturing attitude to literature should mean widening and deepening an original perception, not 'growing out of it,' which would imply the abandonment of what in Keats's phrase has been proved on the pulses."[40]

To some extent, Keats's own letters may have contributed to the persistence of the image of the 1817 Keats as a poet of youthful delights. For instance, accepting the assessment of Endymion as slipshod, Keats states, "I have written independently without judgement. I may write independently and with judgement hereafter."[41] Also, in considering himself "a little more of a philosopher and consequently less of versifying pet-lamb,"[42] Keats appears to be creating a new image for himself--that of a philosophical and not a sentimental poet. In these statements, Keats seems to acknowledge not only the duality of his nature but also seems to betray a conscious effort to overcome the supposed weakness of his youthful sensibilities. Furthermore, when he writes, "I have for some time been hovering between an exquisite sense of the luxurious and the love of philosophy--were I calculated for the former I should be glad--but as I am not I shall turn my soul to the latter,"[43] he seems to reject the exquisite sense of the luxurious and tends to support the theory of the two-stage progressive pattern of development that is a commonplace in critical studies of his works.

Keats's supposed vacillation between poetic beauties and philosophical wisdom has also given rise to a modified version of the common theory of his poetic and critical evolution. William Walsh, representing this variation, maintains that Keats's entire literary career can be viewed as "a history of the friction between the qualities of intensity and concentration in the best of his poems and the drowsily vague and narcotic."[44] By implication, a similar conflict is said to be reflected in Keats's aesthetic notions. D. G. James, commenting on a passage from "Sleep and Poetry," declares, "At once we see the evidence, as has frequently been said, of a conflict in Keats's mind between his exquisite sense of the luxurious and a more strenuous spiritual life."[45] Bush and Garrod subscribe to this view too and cite the same passages quoted earlier from "Sleep and Poetry" in support of "the conflict theory." Garrod, maintaining that "the affinity of Keats's genius is with the luxury of sensuous impressions," argues that "the agonies, the strife/Of human hearts" is no more than Keats's awareness of his being "summoned out of his proper world."[46] To Garrod, the world of sensuous impressions is the real world in which Keats's ideals flourish; hence, he insists that all of Keats's attempts to contend with issues related to human agonies are against the natural bent of his genius. On the other hand, while Bush's contention that "Sleep and Poetry" "is the first full disclosure of conflicts between Keats's opposed instincts and ambitions,"[47] resembles Garrod's view, it considers the poet's ambition to treat themes of human anguish laudable and basic to his greatness.

The "conflict theory," interesting as it is, is in fact like the two-stage theory because it places emphasis on the best of Keats's poems, assumes a basic duality in Keats's nature, and considers the triumph of Keats's intellectual over his instinctual capabilities to be fundamental to his achievements. Both theories, therefore, fall short of providing a complete picture of the poet's growth and maturity; they are unable to affirm the greatness of the later works without belittling the earlier ones.

It is pertinent to reiterate at this point that, while some of Keats's statements seem to support both approaches to his development as poet and critic, they should not be quoted out of context because they are simply the poet's characteristic responses to negative assessments of his works. Keats often grants his critics some of their objections to his works in order to be in a better position to defend the basic qualities of his writings against unacceptable criticisms originating from what he perceives as one-sided considerations. Hence, his recognition of the dual aspects of his endowments, their manifestations in his works, and their occasional opposition to each other does not prevent him from insisting that any view which regards his innate attributes as manifesting themselves in a mutually exclusive manner is untenable.

Any serious attempt to determine the nature of Keats's critical and poetic development must take into account this paradox in the poet's personal assessment of the nature of his genius. For example, Keats concedes the slipshod nature of Endymion to his friends and critics when he states that he had written the poem independently and without judgement, and then promises to write independently and with judgement in his next attempts at poetic creativity.[48] But soon after making this concession to his critics, he proceeds to defend the supposed weaknesses by insisting that the "Genius of Poetry cannot be matured by law or precept, but by sensation and watchfulness on itself."[49] On the basis of this assertion, Keats is able to claim exoneration from the supposed faults detected in the poem because, according to him, whatever emanates from his nature must be seen as part of the totality of his worth. Although he acknowledges the paradoxical nature of this claim, Keats insists upon its truth.

Keats adopts the same method in his reply to the criticism of the first preface to Endymion. The preface was considered bad by most of his friends. Its apparently sentimental qualities were attributed to Hunt's influence.

Characteristically, Keats writes to Reynolds, "Since you all agree that the preface is bad, it must be so--though I am not aware that there is anything like Hunt in it, (and if there is, it is my natural way and I have something in common with Hunt)."[50] And about the second preface he writes, "I am anxious you should find it tolerable. If there is any affectation in it, 'tis natural to me."[51] These remarks can be justifiably taken as Keats's defence of the sentimental elements of both the prefaces and parts of Endymion. This typically Keatsian defence can also be cited as defence against adverse criticisms of the early poems and critical statements, because Keats places a great premium on sensuousness in his conception of art. This belief in the prime relevance of sensation to art is vital to an appreciation of the poet's approach to life, art and criticism--a belief in a sense of wholeness in which "an exquisite sense of the luxurious" enriches "the love of philosophy." Thus, when he suggests that human sensations occupy the primary position in "moods of my mind or rather body--for mind there is none,"[52] he does not deny the reality of the human mind but its right to exist in mutual exclusiveness from the body.

The integration of body and mind, sensation and thought, inspiration and skill, art and life, and art and criticism is essential to the sense of inclusiveness which informs all Keats's works. Although these levels of unity have been generally noted in discussions of Keats's writings, many critics are still unable to resist the attractive temptation of absolute divisions between the early and later works--divisions often based on an assumption of the opposition between the poet's sensuousness and intellection. By assuming strict divisions in Keats's faculties, most commentators create a questionable basis upon which the popular but mistaken two-stage developmental theory thrives.

Even the most discerning critics of Keats have not be able to escape the powerful influence of this two-stage theory in their assessments of Keats's poems and critical views. Douglas Bush, for example, while maintaining that "in Keats, as in a number of Elizabethans, it is impossible to draw a line between sensuousness and spiritual experience,"[53] still proceeds to draw a line between both experiences in Keats by suggesting that "the symbolism of the garden, the temple and the shrine [in 'The Fall of Hyperion'] is another variation on the stages of development from sensuous pleasure to humanitarian concern."[54] More importantly, comparing the supposed evolutionary process stated in "The Fall of Hyperion" with that in "Sleep and Poetry," Bush declares, "the sketch of poetic evolution is not now as in 'Sleep and Poetry' partly wishful prophecy."[55] There is no cogent reason for Bush to consider the symbolic meaning in "The Fall of Hyperion" a more mature critical statement than the explicit one in "Sleep and Poetry" because, as Bush himself suggests, both poems express the same idea or propound the same theory of poetic evolution. Evidently, he assumes that since "Sleep and Poetry" is an early poem and falls within the sensuousness period, it cannot state a critical idea as well as "The Fall of Hyperion" which is a later poem and falls within the period of the poet's humanitarian concern.

Bush, like many other critics, has been forced by the preconceived divisions of the two-stage theory to make some false estimations of the worth of individual poems or passages and critical ideas, especially those that fall within the early period. It is clear, for instance, that the same divisions underlie David Perkins's advice to the reader that he should not take Keats's early depictions of the "pleasure-pain paradox" seriously. While he agrees with "recent critics" that "the pleasure-pain paradox, the coalescing of joy and sorrow in a single experience, runs throughout much of Keats's poetry," he still argues that "in the early verse, this attitude to the nature of experience usually appears more as a flourish than as a perception vitally felt. Thus when Keats writes of 'birds warbling for very joy mellifluous' (Endymion, III, 471), or of bees who 'know that there is richest juice in poison flowers' (Isabella, XL, 1), one need not take the expression seriously."[56] It is difficult to explain--

outside the framework of the assumed two stages--why Perkins tells the reader not to take the passages from Endymion and Isabella seriously, since there is hardly any difference between them and similar passages in Hyperion (III, 64-7) and in the "Ode to Psyche" (52) which he asks the reader to accept as mature philosophical observations.

2

It is important to stress once again that considerations of Keats's critical and poetic evolution from youthful romance or pleasure to masculine identification with human issues--insofar as they assume strict and mutually exclusive divisions in Keats's faculties and works--are inadequate reflections of the poet's normal approach to life, artistic creativity, and criticism. Hence, in this introduction, some critical opinions representing the common view of Keats's development have been briefly examined in order to reveal how they lead to a misunderstanding of the complexity of Keats's achievements, especially as a critic. This study intends, therefore, to demonstrate that Keats's works have an inclusive framework that incorporates all his critical ideas--ideas in the early and later works. Since Keats himself does not relegate any of his poems or ideas to the background in favour of those that critics have termed "mature," this study assumes that both the early and later works throw their own peculiar light on the nature of Keats's critical genius. Another support for this more inclusive approach is to be found in Keats's own advice to George and Georgiana on the proper way to read his letters. He writes, "If I say nothing decisive in any particular part of my letter, you may glean the truth from the whole pretty correctly."[57] This advice will be taken in this study, and applied in bringing the varied aspects of Keats's critical views into relation with one another and in demonstrating his essential critical consciousness.

Basically, this study attempts to reconstruct and assess Keats's aesthetic principles as a means of establishing his distinctive achievement as a critic. Agreeing with Davies's view that "Formal criticism such as that of Johnson, Coleridge, Arnold, and Mr. Eliot is not to be found [in Keats] and yet from some points of view Keats as a critic is their equal,"[58] this study attempts to show that Keats's renown as a critic rests upon the idiosyncratic Romantic poetics which he evolves from his intense involvement in direct human experience (life) and intimate participation in indirect human experience (art)--an involvement in art and life that is discernible even in the early works. As Caldwell rightly observes, major critical ideas such as the poet's lack of a rigid identity, the truth of the poetic imagination, "Negative Capability," and the supremacy of beauty in art were central in Keats's mind from the beginning of his career.[59] Therefore, without recourse to chronology, this study draws freely from Keats's statements and depictions concerning the nature of art and the artist in order to establish the unity of the poet's critical thought.

It is hoped that the systematic reconstruction of Keats's poetics, undertaken in this study on the basis of a careful consideration of the entire corpus of his works, will help to place most of his ideas in their proper contexts and provide the necessary material for the resolution of some of the most common issues raised by critics about what to them are basic changes and contradictions in Keats's ideas during his poetic and critical growth. It becomes clear in the second chapter, for instance, that Ende's proposition that "the idea of the identity-less poet does not survive the period of the composition of Hyperion because Keats abandons it in 1819"[60] is based on an improper definition of what Keats means by "Identity" and "lack of Identity"--an improper definition that causes him to misunderstand the objectivity which Keats's notion of "Identity-less poet" entails, and which is, in Bate's opinion, a native attribute of Keats's mind.[61] The study also reveals that D'Avanzo's belief that Keats's "attitude towards the power of the imagination altered between the composition of Endymion and the Odes"[62]--a view held by many critics--essentially emanates from an uncritical acceptance of the two-stage development theory. That the two-stage evolutionary theory is the main evidence which supports Keats's supposed change of attitude towards the nature of the imagination can also be seen in Stillinger's argument: "The early work of 1816-7 (Poems and Endymion) proposed a visionary seeking after higher truth that we now view as romantic escapism. But as Keats confronted existence more openly, the simple escapism came to be rejected, and the poems of his maturity . . . pose serious conflicts . . . of the pleasure-pain complexity of mortal life."[63]

In the course of this study, the issues raised by critics will be resolved by reconstructions of Keats's views that will demonstrate that many of the alleged changes and contradictions are more apparent than real. Artistic or stylistic success in particular poems is not regarded as a necessary index of mature critical ideas. Since this study is primarily concerned with the poet's views on the nature of art and creativity, ideas surfacing in feeble or stylistically unsuccessful poems as well as those found in stylistically successful ones will be cited equally in reconstructing specific views, and in establishing the inclusive framework which is everywhere visible in Keats's works. Mature critical insights are to be found, therefore, in inferior or early poems as well as in superior or later poems, since the fact that important ideas are part of less successful poems hardly detracts from their worth or pertinence.

This method of investigation is not entirely new in Keatsian scholarship. Many critics are quite conscious of its importance, although they mostly hint at it or apply it partially in their studies of Keats. Wasserman, for instance, declares that "the knowledge of the relevant system of things can often be gained by a study of the entire corpus of the author's writings,"[64] but his concentration on Keats's major poems alone in his quest for the relevant system in the writings of Keats weakens what is otherwise a productive approach. Although Brandes states that "Keats as a poet recognized no truth of the kind that means improvement or exclusion,"[65] his obvious support of the theory of chronological progress in Keats's works--a progress from infatuation with youthful romance to that of human concern--runs counter to his own basically sound insight. And while Pettet's view that "considered together, the poems give an impression of one steadily evolving whole"[66] is valuable, his treatment of the poems and ideas falls short of demonstrating the suggested sense of organicism.

In his introduction to a selection of Keats's letters, Trilling proves himself to be one of the most faithful adherents to the inclusive approach. He states that "The pleasure of the senses was for Keats not merely desirable:

it was the ground of thought. It was a characteristic mode all through his life to begin with the senses and move thence to what he calls 'abstractions' but never leave the senses behind--sense cannot be left behind for of itself it generates the idea and remains continuous with it."[67] In regarding sensation as an integral part of the generation of ideas in Keats's works, Trilling justifiably eliminates the need to trace any dubious kind of evolution in Keats's aesthetic thought. Goldberg's The Poetics of Romanticism is perhaps the most sustained application of the inclusive method to the examination of Keats's conception of art. Nevertheless, by drawing freely upon the works in examining Keats's ideas in relation to their classical roots, he succeeds more in establishing the salient historical basis of Romantic criticism than in demonstrating the distinctively Keatsian view-point. However, by considering Keats's views as basic to Romantic poetics, he emphasizes an important aspect of Keats's conception of art which is not unlike what Saito--in spite of his belief in the two-stage development theory--regards as central to the peculiarly Keatsian Romantic poetics. Saito maintains that Keats is "more advanced than other Romantics in his view of poetry in relation to life"[68] and "in a sense, represents the culmination of Romanticism."[69] Thus, the unmistakable relation of art to life in Keats's critical views guarantees him a place that is independent of

William Hazlitt.

Since art and life are closely related in Keats's works, the first chapter of this study attempts to reconstruct Keats's world view or cosmology because this cosmology constitutes the "metaphysical foundation" of his criticism. The conception of the world as a "Vale of Soul-Making"[70] informs Keats's art and criticism. His reflections on the nature of life and man's interaction with his environment, therefore, constitute his own world view and establish his scheme for the education of poets or all those who seek to live poetic lives. For him, the appropriate understanding of life and its vicissitudes within the framework of a harmonious whole is the goal of living, while the portrayal of this understanding is the ultimate goal of all great art. Therefore, life--the subject and theme of art--is the process of the education of the individual towards an attainment of Soul-state or personal Identity.

In the second chapter, the nature and activities of the poetical character are examined. Essentially, the poetical character, according to Keats, employs the Soul's knowledge and disinterestedness for artistic cognition, creativity, and criticism. The quality of disinterestedness enables the poet to transcend his rigid individuality, partake of the existence of his subject in an intimate manner, and capture the distinguishing character of the subject in art or poetry. The poet's ability to concentrate on or take part in the life of a subject and yet retain a sense of his unobtrusive self-consciousness is an element of the soul's or poet's nature which Keats calls "Negative Capability." Hence, Keats conceives of the poetical character's objective identification with its subject, through empathy and comprehensive moral understanding, as an aid to the poet in the exploration and depiction of the harmony in this world of apparent contradictions.

The third chapter reconstructs Keats's conception of the nature and use of the poetic imagination. Basically, Keats considers the imagination as part of the human consciousnes whose ideal manifestation employs the concordant interrelationship of the mind and body in the apprehension and representation of the soul's knowledge in art or poetry. He distinguishes the poetic or ideal manifestation of the human imagination from its other activities, insisting that only the ideal attribute of the human imagination is the poetic imagination. The poetic imagination, according to him, enables the poet to perceive and represent reality in art. It is the source of the poetical character's ability to come to terms objectively with experiences that are external to it, making even the most remote experiences to become intimately real to the poet. The poetic imagination is also capable of adequately modifying experiences by intensification, creation of new relations, and concentration of effects on specific parts of a subject. Since imaginative modification is possible in both the cognitive and creative modes of the imagination, the question of the imagination's relation to its subject is of prime importance to Keats. Hence, he devotes much of his time to the exploration and use of the human imagination. More than any other Romantic poet, Keats was cognizant of the limitations and excesses of the human imagination in an era in which imagination represented the fountainhead of the stream of idealism.

The fourth chapter discusses what Keats considers to be the theme that unites all artistic endeavours. Keats conceives of the theme as beauty which is truth and truth which is beauty. This aesthetic ideal of beauty unites the concerns of art and life in the essential being of all things. It is the ultimate statement of the harmonious unity of life--a kind of unity in which the ideal and the ordinary coalesce.

The fifth and sixth chapters deal with the methods and techniques that Keats regards as vital to aesthetic expression. The fifth chapter discusses Keats's aversion to a rigid adherence to conventions. He advocates the testing of conventions on the pulses to determine their usefulness in particular instances of creativity. His experimentations with language, poetic forms and techniques, demonstrate a strong belief in the fact that style must flow naturally from the subject. The sixth chapter discusses Keats's view on, and use of myth and symbol. For him, myth and symbol are useful vehicles for the exploration of the nature of the world and man's existence, serving as a means to the discovery and artistic representation of human insights into life.

No specific chapter is devoted to Keats's critical assessments of the works of other artists or poets since Keats views criticism as an integral part of creativity. However, comments on the works of other writers are drawn upon in the attempt to establish his own conception of art. Unlike Hazlitt's, Keats's criticism is not formal--emanating as it does from the combined evidence of poetic symbolism and scattered prose remarks--because his major concern is with the discovery of principles underlying the creation of great works of art. And, of course, great works of art are, in his view, those representations of the world and man's life that enrich man's knowledge of the reality of existence. Hence, Bush suggests that "The Romantic elements in Keats, remained, so to speak, central, sane, normal--in everything but intensity--and did not run into transcendental or pseudo-romantic and propagandist excess."[71] Insofar as the integration of art and life in Keats's criticism enables him to express Romantic ideas in a balanced and satisfying manner, Saito is right in suggesting that Keats can be regarded as "the focus of the Romantic period."[72]

CHAPTER I

ART IS LIFE, LIFE ART

1

There is a general agreement in criticism that John Keats was greatly committed to poetry. Yet the nature of his commitment has not been fully explored. Much has been written about his devotion to it as an art form but very little has been said about his fundamental "interest in poetry with a direct applicability to human life."[1] In most attempts to establish his artistic strengths, the human concerns that form the basis of his love for poetry have been regarded as features of his later poems and given merely peripheral treatment or utterly neglected. Similarly, in discussions of his critical views, very little attention has been given to the way his devotion to life and human experience constitutes the foundation of his conception of poetry or art in general. Thus, the integration of art and life that underlies his avowed love of poetry, and that is evident in such declarations as "I find that I cannot exist without poetry--half the day will not do--I began with a little but habit has made me a Leviathan,"[2] has been ignored in considerations of his love of poetry as a mere fascination with poetic luxuries.

Some justification for equating Keats's devotion to a poetic life with an interest in the sybaritic qualities of art may be found in reports given by some of his friends and contemporaries. For instance, Charles Cowden Clarke reports that "what appeared most to delight Keats in Spenser (after the gorgeous imagery) was the uncommon force and felicity of epithets";[3] G. F. Mathew recalls that "Keats admired more the external decorations than felt the deep emotion of the Muse";[4] and Henry Stephens avers, "Keats delighted especially in Spenser, caring more in poetry for the beauty of imagery, description and simile, than for . . . action and passion."[5] Keats himself seems to have contributed to the credibility of these reports when he declares, "I look upon fine phrases like a lover."[6] Nevertheless, his interest in poetry does go beyond a mere longing for sensuous enjoyment. His belief that poetry is the zenith of all human aspirations and that "the greatest men in the world are poets"[7] makes his sincere and fervent experiencing of the portrayals of human conditions more central in his poetry and criticism than his relish for adroit expressiveness. Leigh Hunt testifies to the validity of Keats's emotional reactions to depictions of human experiences when he recalls that "At the recital of a noble action or a beautiful thought, Keats's eyes would suffuse with tears, and his mouth trembled."[8]

Keats's passionate involvement in experiences portrayed in art signifies much more than a mere yearning after poetic beauties because, to some extent, his ardour is coterminous with an emotional and moral sensitivity to life. This sensitivity, evident in his personal life and in his reactions to what he read, is crucial to any consideration of his love and conception of poetry. In his poems and critical opinions, he views personal and vicarious experiences as indispensable to art and life. Life, to him, provides the individual with personal experiences while art abounds in vicarious incidents that enhance man's comprehension of the nature of his existence.

Keats considers a genuine participation in all that art and life offers to be invaluable to an understanding of the world, because he believes that art illuminates and enriches life just as life enriches and illuminates art. His view of an intimate response to art entails an intense emotional involvement in poetic experiences that are usually based upon or implicitly related to life. An honest confrontation of life, for Keats, includes a full participation in activities that are part of human existence and an intimate understanding of the essential knowledge that all fields of human endeavour provide. Therefore, his quest for knowledge through poetic experiences is at the core of his constant struggle to glean from life and art "the ultimate" they can offer.

A fervent emotional involvement in situations that are portrayed in art constitutes a mode of response which Keats regards as necessary in his attempts to learn more about life from art. It is his belief in the wealth of wisdom that poetry is capable of communicating to the serious reader that prompts his asking Reynolds to "say a word or two on some Passage of Shakespeare that may have come rather new to [him] which must be continually happening, notwithstanding that we read them forty times."[9] He then proceeds to quote a number of passages from The Tempest that have come to assume new significance for him. Art, for him, opens up new vistas for the human mind because it depicts experiences that augment those that individuals have in the the course of their normal lives.

The situations portrayed in poetry, depending upon the response of the reader, are as real as those in the normal world. In fact, Keats conceives of poetry or art as capable of creating many worlds in which the same measure of reality present in the normal world is duplicated; hence he maintains that the reader's life in poetic worlds is as real as that in the actual world. He writes about the reality of his own life in the poet's world:

> I feel more and more everyday . . . that I do not live in this world alone but in a thousand worlds. No sooner am I alone than shapes of epic greatness are stationed around me, and serve my Spirit the office which is equivalent to a King's body guard--then "Tragedy with scepter'd pall, comes sweeping by." According to my state of mind I am with Achilles shouting in the Trenches, or with Theocritus in the Vales of Sicily. Or I throw my whole being into Troilus, and repeating those lines, "I wander, like a lost Soul upon the Stygian Banks staying for waftage," I melt into the air with a voluptuousness so delicate that I am content to be alone.[10]

The reality of artistic worlds to Keats is patent in the manner in which it captivates his entire being and explains why he lives in the worlds that he creates. "Endymion and I are at the bottom of the sea,"[11] he tells Miss Reynolds. For him, artists or poets must believe in the reality of the worlds they create in order to be effective.

Keats's avowal of the reality of the created or imagined worlds of art is not a product of what Wellek unfairly terms "Hazlitt's confusion of fiction and reality arising from his insufficient distinction between art and reality."[12] Keats is conscious of and explicitly acknowledges the distinction between art and life, imaginative truth and actuality. His understanding of imaginative truth has much in common with Coleridge's belief in the "willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith."[13] A poet, in Keats's view, must be able to suspend his ego and sometimes his everyday knowledge of actuality in order to be in a position to encounter his subject on its own terms.[14] Hence his life in the artistic worlds is neither an escape from nor a substitute for his life in the real world. His willingness to adventure into the rather remote world of art springs from his belief that an intense experiencing of the imaginative world enriches man's experience of the real world even as an intense involvement in the real world enhances the imaginative world. As F. R. Leavis correctly remarks, "Keats never takes his dreams for reality or . . . remains lost in them."[15]

Keats also believes that the knowledge gained from all fields of human endeavour contributes to the usefulness of art by enabling man to separate truth from sheer imaginative creations. He states that "every department of knowledge is calculated towards the goal"[16] of revealing truths about life. Therefore, all fields of human endeavour provide art with a broadened scope for the exploration of the diverse circumstances of the world. The inclusion of the insights from all departments of learning in poetry, for Keats, makes it the focal point of all human concerns and aspirations. His wish to do "the world some good"[17] by means of a poetic exploration of life inspires his constant search for wisdom through learning and through his attempts to respond passionately to the poems he reads. He writes,

> --I know nothing, I have read nothing and I mean to follow Solomon's direction of "get Wisdom." I find I can have no enjoyment in this world but in a continual drinking of Knowledge--I find that there is no worthy pursuit but the idea of doing some good for the world--some do it with their society--some with their wit--some with a sort of power conferring pleasure and good humour on all they meet and in a thousand ways, all equally dutiful to the command of Great Nature--there is but one way for me--the road lies through application, study and thought.[18]

Keats seeks comprehensive knowledge "through application, study and thought" in order to be adequately armed in his efforts to do the world some good through a devotion to poetry.

Knowledge, for Keats, must be based upon experience because "Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced--

Even a proverb is no proverb to you, till your life has illustrated it."[19] The reality of art also depends on an imaginatively personal response to what is read. Hence, when Keats says that "We read fine things but do not feel them to the full until we have gone through the same steps as the Author,"[20] he proclaims the relevance of experience to an apprehension of life through art. The true index of reality to Keats is the degree of intimate involvement in an experience. "What can I say but what I feel?"[21] Keats once asked, because he regards the "state of excitement" produced by intense sensation as the "only state for the best of poetry" and therefore that state is the only thing that he cares for in all his attempts to encounter reality.[22] This state of excitement is both the creative impulse in poetry and the necessary condition for a valid appreciation and conception of art. Not only is Keats's belief in the reality of his "feeling consciousness" relevant to his view of the proper response to art, it also explains his characteristic approach to "a literary image as though it were a truth one feels on the pulses."[23]

A passionate experience is possible both in an individual's personal encounters of life and in his reading of poetry or response to any other form of art. Indeed, because of the major role that art plays in Keats's life, Bate maintains that "the primary inspiration of Keats, a virile, relatively unbookish poet is intensely literary--

the ideals, the criteria, the experience (what little he has)."[24] Keats holds the view that the first step to true knowledge is "through the human passions" and that sensation is the most reliable means of acquiring an intimate apprehension of the nature of man and his existence in the world. Keats, by means of a keen application of his passions to art, strives to convert art or literature into knowledge that is personally real to him.

Keats's passionate exploration of poetic experiences arises from his consideration of poetry as a repository of intensely felt wisdom that has been distilled from the seemingly enigmatic circumstances of life, and preserved by many generations of poets. "Reading texts as life,"[26] he attempts, in spite of the apparent contradictions in the world,[27] to embrace the "principle of the harmonious unity of life"[28] which he regards as the focal point of all poetic endeavours. The principle of the harmonious unity of life which underlies all artistic efforts is at the core of the wealth of wisdom that abounds in poetry. This mine of wisdom that is in poetry makes poems or other artistic works kindred to formal philosophy, but unlike philosophy, poetry, as "the true voice of feeling,"[29] is able to portray life and the wisdom derived from it in a manner capable of enlisting the reader's passionate participation. As Keats maintains, "axioms in philosophy are no axioms until they are proved on the pulses";[30] thus, poetry is the means for testing philosophical axioms on the pulses. Keats would agree with Plato that "poetry feeds and waters the passions"[31] but would disagree with him over his claim that emotions are "inferior parts of the soul"[32] and argue that because passions arise from man's intimate experiencing of reality, they constitute the superior part of his soul and contain an intimate kind of reality that formal philosophy does not have.

In Keats's view, the Platonic inability to comprehend the special significance of passionate reality springs from an absolute reliance on reason. In most of his poems--poems as different from each other in style as "I Stood Tip-toe" and *Hyperion*--Keats seriously explores and even lingers upon experiences that nourish or call into play intimate human emotions. He is more interested in passionate human responses to life than in rational ones because he believes in their peculiar kind of reality. In *Lamia* (II, 229-238) he vehemently denounces "philosopher Apollonius's" destruction of the dream-world that Lamia and Lycius were passionately part of because, for Keats, the airy palace represents a poetic palace while Lycius represents a human poet. Apollonius represents the imaginatively unresponsive Platonic rationalist whose activities threaten the existence of the poetic world. Lycius is, however, not the ideal poet for Keats. His inability to comprehend the subtle relation between art and life--a relationship which does not confuse art and reality and which is the basis of the Keatsian poetics--spells his doom.

Keats, in his desire to live a poetic life, tries to avoid Lycius's mistake by partaking of the harmonious beauties and wisdom that are united in poetry. Since he believes that great poets capture this complex harmony and wisdom in their works, he seeks to create it in what he writes. A useful guide to what he desires in poetry is discernible in the following lines from "God of the Meridian," where the harmonic notes from the lyre coexist with philosophical truths: "O let me, let me share/With the hot lyre and thee/The staid Philosophy" (20-22). The lyre at the command of Keats's favourite muse, Apollo, plays harmonious notes that are replete with philosophical truths about life. His wish to share in the melodies and knowledge which the lyre--a traditional symbol of poetry--produces, demonstrates one of his major interests in art.

Apollo, as the god of poetry and song, is "more than a mere figure of speech or literary allusion for Keats."[33] The god is personally real to him. His intimate involvement with this god of poetry is evident in poems such as "I Stood Tip-toe" (47-50), "To My Brother George" (9-12), "Sleep and Poetry" (58-61), and Endymion (141-144). His desire to be, and vision of being, part of "Apollo's kingdom" are unmistakable. Ian Jack aptly captures Keats's personal relation to Apollo when he states that "Keats is in the habit of thinking of poetry as a continent or a world, ruled over by the various great poets as feudal dependants of Apollo. The most memorable expression of this thought is to be found in the opening lines of the sonnet, 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer':

> Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
> And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
> Round many western islands have I been
> Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold."[34]

If Keats states that bards hold various kingdoms in fealty to Apollo in this sonnet, he enumerates and depicts the kingdoms and their rulers in the "Ode to Apollo." The rulers are, of course, poets like Milton, Homer, Shakespeare and Spenser, while the kingdoms are representations of various aspects of human life--aspects reflecting the pleasures and agonies of existence. The ultimate act of creativity, achieved in the combined efforts of the poets and Apollo, is conceived of as the unity of the passionate music (of the lyre) with the intimate knowledge (of life). His desire for a poetic life is, therefore, a desire to be part of the glorious company of Apollo's poets who are poets that vividly reflect the human condition in the harmonious beauties of their works.

Apollo represents, for Keats, the concord in all things--a concord in which the apparent conflict between art and life, and the inherent contradictions in life are non-existent. Hence, Bate maintains that "Apollo is always the most symbolically weighted of the mythological names for

Keats."[35] And Evert effectively demonstrates how "Keats's poetic theory is centred on the god, Apollo,"[36] and why the god is capable of bearing the weight of symbolic meanings that the poet associates with him. He writes: "As the god of astronomy, Apollo presides over the universal system of physical harmony; as god of medicine, he maintains harmony among the physical elements of human organism; as god of the sun, he marks the passage of time and presides over the ripening of the fruits of the earth; as god of song and poetry, he presides over the ripening of the human intellect and brings it tc comparable fruition in the harvest of harmonious expression."[37]

Keats's consideration of poetry as the proper medium for the unity of knowledge and the beauty of expression is closely related to his poetic statement that "poetry is the supreme power/ . . . might half slumb'ring on its own right arm" and "a friend to soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man" ("Sleep and Poetry," 236-7; 246-7). His view of poetry as might half slumbering on its own right arm corroborates his belief in the beneficial and powerful impact which great works of art or poetry, as repositories of wisdom, make on the consciousness of mankind even by "their mere passive existence."[38] The unobtrusiveness of the beneficial influence exerted by great works of art on man heightens the significance of the influence. In like manner, poets contribute to the education of man through their works. Just as poets' works are "friends to soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man," so also are the poets themselves friends and constant guides to man all through life; hence Keats contends that because Milton "wrote 'Lycidas,' 'Comus,' Paradise Lost and other poems, he was an active friend to Man all his life and has been since his death."[39] Thus, not only does Keats seek to do the world some good by his devotion to poetry, he judges other poets by the standards of "his concern for, and desire to help humanity."[40] A typical example of his asssessment of the worth of poets by their concern for humanity is evident in his comparative consideration of the manner in which the human concerns of Milton and Wordsworth affect their status as poets.[41]

The central place which Keats allots to poetry by virtue of its relevance to human life dictates some measure of caution in interpreting statements in which Keats seems to suggest that "fine doing" is more important than "fine writing." He declares, "I am convinced more and more that fine writing is next to fine doing the top thing in the world; the paradise lost becomes a greater wonder."[42] The comparison of fine writing and fine doing initially appears to set fine doing above fine writing. In fact, this initial impression is what prompts Trilling's suggestion that "Poetry was Keats's life yet when he wants to praise poetry, he says . . . the deed comes before the word for him . . . the guarantor of the word."[43] Trilling's conclusion is rather hasty because a careful examination of the nature of the comparison which Keats makes reveals that fine doing and fine writing unite in the discovery of the wonder of Paradise Lost.

Trilling's proposition cannot fully explain Keats's view on the issue because it reduces the importance of poetry to a level that is unacceptable to Keats. Keats also seems to suggest that the humanist philosopher is more important than the poet when he writes, "I am convinced more and more every day that (excepting the human friend philosopher) a fine writer is the most genuine being in the world. Shakespeare and paradise lost become greater wonders to me."[44] Nevertheless, it is more accurate to say that the poet is a doer because of the effects that his works are supposed have on man--thus, making poetry a kind of deed in Keats's scheme of things. Also, because poetry is a mine of wisdom, the poet can be called a human friend philosopher. Keats's quotation from Milton's Comus is an apt poetical rendering of the fact that fine writing can be equated with fine doing, and that the poet can be regarded as essentially a friend to man:

> How charming is divine Philosophy
> Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose
> But musical as in Apollo's lute. (476-8)[45]

Divine philosophy is likened to the harmony proceeding from Apollo's lute. The unity of Apollo's music and the charms of divine (not formal) philosophy in Milton's Comus is similar to the unity of poetry and philosophy that is depicted in Keats's "God of the Meridian."

Keats's devotion to poetry can be justifiably considered as based on his idea of living a poetic life because just as "it is true that he was so devoted to life that his concerns bear a close relationship to his poetry,"[46] so also is it true that he was so devoted to art that his concerns bear a direct relationship to life. In his view of "a poetic life," art and life are brought into cooperation with each other so that "the old and vexing conflicts between art and morality, between literature and life are resolved."[47] The poetic life for Keats does not only entail an individual's intimate involvement in art and life for the purpose of writing great poems that enrich human life, it also requires that the poet, because of his enormous knowledge which is analogous to that which deified Apollo in Hyperion,[48] should live an exemplary life. Therefore, it is no surprise that he expresses disappointment at the behaviour of certain "literary men" who initially helped to arouse his interest in poetry and art in general. "I am disgusted with literary Men,"[49] he writes in reaction to the jealousies that led to the quarrel between Hunt and Haydon.

The moral sensitivity to human situations that Keats expects to find in the lives of all those who claim to live poetic lives is that which is based on insights into the nature of man and the world. Keats sees such insights as are gained through a dedication to art and life as invaluable to meaningful solutions of most human problems. The kind of understanding that he expects all artists to have can be illustrated from his perceptive statements on the cause of most quarrels in the world and on the nature of man:

> What occasions the greater part of the World's Quarrels? simply this, two Minds meet and do not understand each other, time enough to prevent any shock or surprise at the conduct of each party.[50]
>
> Men should bear with each other--there lives not the man who may not be cut up, aye hashed to pieces on his weakest side. The best of men have but a portion of good in them--a kind of spiritual yeast in their frames which creates the ferment of existence--by which a man is propell'd to act and strive and buffet with circumstances.[51]

For Keats, whatever knowledge is derived from art and life should be of use to the artist in his own life as well as be of use to all humanity. The philosophic wisdom acquired by those who live poetic lives must also be evident in what they write. A high level of practical discernment is for Keats the true foundation of Shakespeare's life--"a life of Allegory" in which his works are comments on the life he led.[52] Therefore, to Keats, a poetic life (being allegorical in nature) leaves enough clues in the works that are its products to aid the conscientious reader in his attempts to decipher its real significance.

Keats demands of critics the same measure of practical discernment in their attempts to discover the profound human truths in works of art as he demands of poets or artists in their attempts to capture the essential human experience in their works. While he does not regard the professional critic as one who necessarily leads a poetic life, he still insists upon the relevance of comprehensive and practical knowledge to the critic's assessment of poetic works; thus, demonstrating his belief in the close relationship between the critic and the poet. In fact, his view of criticism as a continuous process of the investigation into the nature and purpose of art is an invaluable guide to the understanding of his convictions about the role of criticism. His comment on Hazlitt's criticism of Wordsworth's "Gipsies" shows a profound insight into the issues that a critic must grapple with, and establishes his characteristic critical approach to all works of art:

> Now with respect to Wordsworth's Gypseys, I think that he is right and yet I think that Hazlitt is right and yet I think that Wordsworth is rightest. Wordsworth had not been idle; he had not been without his task; nor had they the Gypseys--they in the visible world had been as picturesque an object as he is in the invisible world. The smoke of their fire--their attitudes--their Voices were all in harmony with the Evening. It is a bold thing to say--and I would not say it in print--but it seems to me that if Wordsworth had thought a little deeper at that moment he would not have written the poem at all. I should judge it to have been written in one of the most comfortable Moods of his life--it is a kind of sketchy

> intellectual Landscape--not a search after Truth--nor is it fair to attack him on such a subject--for it is with the Critic as with the poet; had Hazlitt thought a little deeper and been in a good temper, he would not have spied an imaginary fault there.[53]

In this comment Keats identifies the strengths and weaknesses of Wordsworth's "Gipsies." He attributes the failure of the poem to Wordsworth's comfortable mood, a mood that seems to have beclouded his understanding of the peculiar life of the gipsies when he wrote the poem. To regard the gipsies as those who engage in "a torpid life" (21) and to call them "Wild outcasts of society" (28) as Wordsworth does, is in Keats's view a misunderstanding of the nature of the lives of the gipsies--a misunderstanding which is difficult to explain in view of the fact that Wordsworth wrote poems like "Expostulation and Reply" and "The Tables Turned" in praise of apparent inactivity. Hence, Keats logically states that the work "is a kind of intellectual Landscape--not a search after Truth." On the other hand, he feels that Hazlitt's severe criticism of the work is misdirected. He argues that the attack on the subject of the poem is unfair since it has a lot of potentialities that are inadequately exploited by Wordsworth. He also politely condemns Hazlitt's direct attack on Wordsworth. His balanced judgement on the poem and on Hazlitt's comment is that both the poet and the critic should have applied their comprehensive understanding of life to what they did in order to seek after the truth in a steady manner.

Keats's belief in "how great a thing it is [to be a poet and] in how great things are gained by it,"[54] is usually coupled with an awareness of the challenges that a poetic life poses for an aspirant. He is, of course, confident that the basic requirement for a poetic life is an intimate passionate participation in life and art which leads to the acquisition of a knowledge of the world that is based on a comprehensive understanding of life. Aware of the fact that the course leading to the acquisition of poetic wisdom based on "the principle of the harmonious unity in life"[55] is long and tedious, he patiently strives for the ideals that he attributes to a poetic life by unwavering dedication to life and art. Thus, his entire life can be rightly termed a life that is devoted to the necessary training which will meet the high standards of an artistic life, and guarantee him a place "among the English Poets after his death."[56]

In "Sleep and Poetry" Keats wishes "for ten years, that [he] may overwhelm/[Himself] in poesy" (96-7), and though this wish does not entirely come true because of his early death, the few years that he did live were devoted to doing the "deed/That [his] soul has to itself decreed" (97-8). The deed which his soul decreed to itself is that of living a poetic life through an intimate exploration of, and participation in art and life; hence for him, life is a continuous process of self-development or education. The poet thus seeks and advocates a particular kind of education which (as the crowning experience of a poetic life) culminates in the individual's personal participation in, and understanding of the harmony of existence--a harmony derived from a comprehensive knowledge of the world.

Keats has a specific programme for the education of the poet. The programme is systematically conceived even though he claims that he "shall never be a Reasoner because [he cares] not to be in the right."[58] Nevertheless, his own doubt about his ability to think abstractly does not prevent him from "habitually and characteristically assimilating experience into comprehensive metaphysical structures."[59] In fact, the truth in his perception of the nature of the circumstances of the world, the nature of human experience, and the impact that these circumstances and experiences make on the human mind heightens the importance of life to the systematic structures that are discernible in his works. Similarly, the reality of his perceptions of the nature, function and form of poetry or art is responsible for the fact that he subsumes human concerns in his poems and aesthetics. As Goldberg puts it, "cosmology and aesthetics are always so closely interwoven as to be almost indistinguishable"[60] in the works of Keats. Therefore Keats's understanding of the nature of existence and of the world forms the foundation of his art and his aesthetics.

Keats's systematized perception of the course and goal of poetic life becomes more obvious when his well-known speculations on the circumstances that prompted his calling the world a "Vale of Soul-making" instead of a "vale of tears"[61] and his discussion of the "simile of life" based on his "Chambers of Thought"[62] are considered to be related to each other. In his speculations on the process of "soul-making" and on the "Chambers of Thought," he examines the nature of the world, human existence and human experience insofar as they are relevant to the training of the individual through expanding his mind and sharpening his sensibilities. For him, the pains and pleasures of life combine to form the source of man's education in the world --an education whose goal is to enable man attain soul-state or personal identity. In a broad sense, all those who attain personal identity or soul-states partake of the benefits of a poetic life because to them is given the bliss which is a reward for their poetic apprehension of the "vistas of . . . beauties" in the world and the "agonies, the strife/ Of human life" ("Sleep and Poetry," 73; 124-5). For Keats, this bliss that souls have is a form of salvation that is neither restricted to the idea of a Christian heaven, nor to a life after death. It is bliss that is an integral part of life, and because it is a kind of happiness that proceeds from "a system of Salvation which does not affront our reason or humanity,"[63] it is invaluable to the individual's personal life. Keats was always striving to attain this bliss and he did taste of it in great moments of poetic experience of life.

The attainment of Soul-state is, for Keats, dependent upon a successful completion of the programme of education that is discernible in his speculations on the process of Soul-making and in his simile of human life. As stated earlier, the programme designed to instil the principle of harmony in the world into the mind of the individual also intensifies his emotional and moral sensitivity to life and humanity. The suitability of the scheme is guaranteed by the fact that it recognizes the innate attributes and needs of human beings. The programme first defines the state in which the human being is born, relates this state to the circumstances of the world, sets up the various stages of development according to the issues of life that are to be learned and the measure of progress expected of the individual, and then concludes by describing the attributes of a soul or an identity.

In what state is the human being first born? Keats's attempt to answer this question is comprised of a comparative consideration of the nature of a soul and that of "an Intelligence":

> . . . Soul is distinguished from Intelligence. There may be intelligence or sparks of divinity in millions--but they are not Souls till they acquire identities, till each one is personally itself. Intelligences are atoms of perception--

> they know and they see and they are pure, in short they are God.[64]

The Intelligence is thus the raw form in which the human being is born into the world. The Intelligence comes into the world with the capacity for perception. In the untried state, intelligences are neutral, without knowledge that is personally real to them even though they "know and they see and they are pure." In short, because of their purity and apparently de-personalized perception and knowledge, "they are God." However, soon as the intelligences are born, they commence to exercise their capabilities for perception in the task of self-definition that leads to the acquisition of personal identities.

Having defined the intelligence, Keats proceeds to consider the "grand materials" that act upon each other in the process of schooling the intelligence in order to make it a soul; there are

> . . .three grand materials, acting the one upon the other for a series of years. These three Materials are Intelligence--the human heart (as distinguished from intelligence or Mind) and the World or Elemental space suited for the proper action of the Mind and the Heart on each other for the purpose of forming the Soul or Intelligence destined to possess the sense of Identity.[65]

Two of the three grand materials are attributes of the Intelligence--the heart and the head of the human being. The head and heart are the basic faculties with which the individual strives to acquire his own personal identity. Keats declares, "I think the process of soul-making is a grander system of salvation than the Christian religion--or rather it is a system of Spirit-creation."[66] He does not conceive of the heart and the head as opposite or contending faculties but he conceives of them as complementing each other. In fact, within the Keatsian system of Spirit-creation, a contest between both faculties will be considered to be tantamount to a severe mal-development in the individual. Neither faculty is superior to the other even though Keats grants the heart a primary position because he regards it as the centre of the emotional and moral sensibilities of man. Both faculties must receive, process, and assess the data of life in order to arrive at a mature insight into the nature of existence; they must cooperate and bring the entire being of the individual into play.

The third material in the process of schooling the intelligence is the world. The mind and the heart respond to, and are affected by circumstances that are integral parts of the world. Thus, though Keats's reference to the world as "Elemental space" may seem to restrict what his idea of the world signifies by excluding the social setting and issues related to personal relationships, in reality his vision of the world includes all the circumstances that affect human existence. The true nature of the world as Keats sees it is more obvious from the following "homely" formulation of the Keatsian system:

> I will call the world a School instituted for

> the purpose of teaching little children to read--I will call the human heart the horn Book read in that School--and I will call the child able to read, the Soul made from that School and its hornbook. Do you not see how necessary a World of pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a Soul? A place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways. Not merely is the Heart a Hornbook, it is the Mind's Bible, it is the Mind's experience, it is the text from which the Mind or intelligence sucks its identity.[67]

The fact that the world is a school in which the human heart is the hornbook demonstrates that human experience in the form of "feeling and suffering in a thousand diverse ways" is part of the school's materials and, by implication, a component of the world. The heart as the "Mind's Bible" is also the source of the "Mind's experience, it is the text from which the Mind or intelligence sucks its identity." Not only is the heart a source of intimate feelings, it is also the source of moral direction for man's intellectual faculty.

In spite of the emphasis which Keats places on the "pains and troubles" of the world in his system of spirit-creation, the elemental world and human love and friendship are still important parts of the world that he depicts. In fact, for him, the beauties and inclemencies of physical nature have their parallels in human life; hence a proper reaction to natural conditions can enhance man's response to life. Little wonder then that the structure of the sonnet "To My Brother George" is based on a gradual progress from the appreciation of the wonders of the sky and "The ocean with its vastness, its blue green,/Its ships, its rocks, its caves, its hopes, its fears/Its voice mysterious" (5-7), to an even better appreciation of the benefits of human relationships; "But what, without the thought of thee/Would be the wonders of the sky and sea?" (13-14).

The world for Keats is not made up of agonizing circumstances alone; its beauties and disasters are the seemingly contradictory elements that the individual must intensely feel and comprehend before he can gain the knowledge of the world's wholeness that is necessary for the attainment of the Soul-state. In Keats's poems natural beauties are presented in portrayals ranging from idyllic settings to mythical scenes set in natural environments:

> Things such as these are ever harbingers
> To trains of peaceful images: the stirs
> Of a swan's neck unseen among the rushes,
> A linnet starting all about the bushes:
> A butterfly, with golden wings broad parted
> Nestling a rose, convuls'd as though it smarted
> With over pleasure--many, many more
> Might I indulge in my store
> Of luxuries.... ("Sleep and Poetry," 339-347)

The individual must be able to indulge in such pleasures as part of what constitutes the reality of the world. Protagonists in Keats's poems--Isabella, Endymion, Madeline, and "the poet"--are usually placed in situations where they can partake of these pleasures. Keats's belief in the salutary effects of the enjoyment of pleasures is also evident in his personal life. He once expressed a wish to show Bailey the importance of "worldly" pleasures to human life: "I was in the hopes . . . to point out things in the world worth your enjoyment."[68] An interesting point to note is that the pleasures listed in the extract from "Sleep and Poetry" contain "seeds" of the agonies of life; hence, the butterfly at the height of its enjoyment is "convuls'd as though it smarted/With over pleasure."

Since all forms of worldly beauties and human friendships which provide man with joy are but parts of the complete picture of the world, they must not be regarded as shields against the world's ills. Even in elemental nature, there are disasters like earthquakes, "sands of Africa, Whirlpools and volcanoes."[69] These natural inclemencies have parallels in the circumstances of human life. More importantly, other living creatures are just as insecure as man. In "To J. H. Reynolds, Esq." Keats depicts a frightening and hostile natural condition:

> . . . but I saw
> Too far into the sea, where every maw
> The greater on the less feeds evermore.--
> But I saw too distant into the core
> Of eternal fierce destruction,
> And so from happiness I far was gone.
> . . . .
> Still do I that most fierce destruction see,--
> The shark at savage prey,--the Hawk at pounce,--
> The gentle Robin, like a Pard or Ounce,
> Ravening a worm. (93-8; 102-5)

Once again it is necessary to reiterate that this scene of fierce destruction in nature must not be taken as representing a complete view of life or the world. The poet is aware of the limited nature of this vision of life; hence he dismisses it as a vision caused by "horrid moods" (105). The proper approach to this scene painted from life is to see the eternal destruction within the context of a world that has elements which are united in concordance, "Beyond the sweet and bitter world."[70] A mere understanding of the contradictions in the world is not enough to make an Intelligence a Soul. All contradictions in life must be intimately felt as a means of making the unity and wholeness of the world personally real to the individual or as a means of transforming the Intelligence into a Soul.

The insecurity of other living creatures has its human parallels too:

> . . . man is originally a "poor forked creature," subject to the same mischances as the beasts of the forest, destined to hardships and disquietudes of some kind or the other. If he improves by degrees his bodily accommodations and comforts--at each stage, at each ascent, there are awaiting for him a fresh set of annoyances--he is mortal and there is still a heaven with its stars above him.[71]

While, for Keats, man's improvement of his "bodily accommodations and comforts" seems to raise him above beasts of the forest, it does not immunize him against the "set of annoyances" in life. The destructive instincts of beasts can be seen in man's actions too: "The greater part of Men make their way with the same instinctiveness, the same unwavering eye from their purposes, the same eagerness as the Hawk."[72] Human nature, being susceptible to "fear, hope, and wrath/Actions of rage and passion" (Hyperion, I, 331-2), is as responsible for the "agonies, the strife/Of human hearts" ("Sleep and Poetry," 123-4) as natural sources. Is the cause of human cruelty not traceable to acts of rage or passion?

> Ah! shall I ever tell its cruelty,
> When the fire flashes from a warrior's eye,
> And his tremendous hand is grasping [a sword],
> And his dark brow for very wrath is knit?
> ("Specimen of an Induction to a Poem," 23-4)

Apart from man's negative instinctual activities, his mortality is not without its pains because it makes the apparent eternity of "a heaven with its stars above him" more obvious.

As suggested earlier in relation to the soul's reaction to natural circumstances, the privations of human life and the suffering that results from man's fiery instincts must be regarded as components of a world that is based on the principle of harmony. They must not be considered in isolation from other elements of the world because, if they are viewed as the only reality in life, they can dampen man's vision of himself or of the world he lives in. All negative qualities in man have their positive aspects. Incidents arising from the negative qualities of man are obvious annoyances that must be intensely felt: "But then, as Wordsworth says, 'we have all one human heart' [The Cumberland Beggar, I, 153]--there is an electric fire in human nature tending to purify--so that among those negatively instinctive human creatures there is some birth of new heroism."[73] The fervent experiencing of human agonies should, instead of leading to pessimism, lead to a great sensitivity to life. Anyone who has a comprehensive vision of life--a vision in which the pains and pleasures of existence are placed in concordant relation to one another--is given such reward as Keats seeks from tasting the "bitter-sweet" plight of King Lear in his sonnet titled "On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again":

> When through the oak forest I am gone,
> Let me not wander in a barren dream,
> But when I am consumed in the fire,
> Give me new Phoenix wings to fly at my desire.
> (11-14)

The enormous effect of the fire, which in the final stage of development consumes the Intelligence, guarantees it redemption from a barren dream, giving it new wings to rise from the fire like a phoenix and enabling it to live a new life or become a soul. Therefore, an Intelligence must pass through the three discernible stages in this scheme--an enjoyment of the pleasures and beauties in life, an intensely passionate experiencing of life's pains, and an intimate understanding of the harmony in life's apparent contradictions--before acquiring personal Identity.

Keats re-states the same stages of development implied in the process of Soul-making in his "simile of life" where he compares "human life to a large Mansion with many Apartments."[74] Although he suggests the existence of many apartments in the mansion of life, it is evident from the context that there are actually three apartments. Each apartment represents a stage in the process of the Intelligence's progress towards Soul-state. The education of the Intelligence, according to the scheme, comprises a thorough exploration of the three apartments in the mansion of life. As the intelligence explores the apartments, he progresses through stages that are analogous to those levels of achievement hinted at in the process of Soul-making.

In discussing the simile of human life, Keats concentrates on the internal parallels of the three apartments in the mansion of life, parallels which he refers to as "Chambers of the human Mind."[75] The mansion of human life, in its internalized version, consists of chambers instead of apartments. Each chamber represents a higher degree of enlightenment for the Intelligence undergoing the programme leading to the acquisition of personal identity. As was the case in his discussion of the apartments in the mansion of life, Keats suggests the existence of many chambers of thought. But his scheme is really based on the assumption that there are three clearly defined chambers. The education of the Intelligence in this scheme consists of the expansion of the mind until it is able to absorb all truths revealed in the three chambers.

Keats calls the first chamber "the infant and thoughtless Chamber." It is made up of sensations that are unsifted and unassessed because of the apparent dormancy of consciousness. It is the store-house of unevaluated infant impressions. The effect it has on the human being is like that in which the Intelligence is first engendered in the scheme of soul-making. This chamber, being the seat of innocence, can be regarded as the domain of the "spark of divinity." It is therefore reasonable to consider the newly born Intelligence as being born into this chamber.

The second chamber is the "Chamber of Maiden-Thought." It is more complex than the first because, not only does it mark the awakening of consciousness, it also has two distinctive and near-opposite effects. The first effect is that of brightness which leads to an intoxication "with light and the atmosphere, we see nothing but pleasant wonders, and think of delaying there for ever in delight."[76] Poetry produced in this state of intoxication reflects the pleasures and wonders that characterize this partial effect of the chamber of Maiden-Thought. It is an inadequate kind of poetry that creates a dream world of perpetual pleasures that may serve as a means of escape from the stark realities of life. Needless to say that the inadequacy of this kind of poetry can be explained by pointing out its poor reflection of the Keatsian cosmos. Nevertheless, delightful as the bright effect of this chamber is, it is difficult for any Intelligence capable of becoming a soul either to remain in this state of inebriety or to enjoy its escapist poetry for ever, because the shocking truths of existence impinge upon the consciousness to usher in a gradual awakening to the other realities within the chamber, realities that must compel the Intelligence to experience the next effect of this chamber.

The second effect of this chamber of Maiden-Thought is that of darkness. The darkening of the chamber results from a realization of the "siege of contraries"[77] through the sharpening of "one's vision into the heart and nature of Man--convincing one's nerves that the world is full of Miseries and Heartbreak, Pains, Sickness and oppression."[78] As the Intelligence experiences the "Heart-vexations of life,"[79] the chamber "becomes gradually darken'd and at the same time on all sides of it many doors are set open--but all leading to dark passages."[80] Poetry produced under the influence of this darkened effect of the chamber reflects unrelieved gloom. It is a kind of poetry that concentrates on the seamy side of life, often exaggerating man's woes and leading to a consideration of the world as "a vale of tears." This gloomy view of the world is inconsistent with the reality which the Intelligence aspires towards knowing in a personal manner. In spite of the fact that this chamber produces effects that represent both the pleasures and pains of existence, it does not provide the means by which the Intelligence can unite the two effects into a harmonious whole. Hence, a third chamber is necessary for the demonstration of the intimate and consonant relation of the bright and dark effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought.

The third chamber is where the Intelligence eventually acquires personal Identity or becomes a Soul. Since Keats does not give this chamber a specific name, it is proper to call it the "Chamber of Mature-Thought" or the "Chamber of Soul-state." This chamber has only one effect--the effect of mellowed brightness which reflects the harmonious coalescence of the two effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought. In it, relations are formulated between the apparently contradictory aspects of life that are symbolized by the brightness and darkness of the previous chamber. It is the chamber in which man sees "the balance of good and evil"[81] in the world. It is where he realizes that "every ill has its share of good," that "a myrtle than/E'er grew in Paphos, from bitter weeds/Lifts its head into the air" ("Sleep and Poetry," 48-50), that the world is neither "bright, nor sombre wholly/But mingled up" (Endymion, II, 223-4), and that life is like "a rose's hope while yet unblown/The reading of an ever changing tale" ("Sleep and Poetry," 90-91). The soul that is born in this chamber of Mature-Thought is able to appreciate the relevance of the allegory of the rose to life itself: " . . . suppose the rose to have sensations, it blooms on a beautiful morning, it enjoys itself but there comes a cold wind, a hot sun--it cannot escape it, it cannot destroy its annoyances--they are as native to the world as itself--no more can man be happy in spite."[83]

The Soul-state acquired in this chamber of Mature-Thought, is the ultimate human achievement in the Keatsian system for salvation. It is a state in which the entire being of an individual is spiritualized by a comprehensive knowledge of existence. The Identity gained in this final stage of poetic education, guarantees bliss or happiness to the individual. And since it is obvious that happiness in Keats's view is not a mere indulgence in unalloyed pleasures, the bliss experienced in the Soul-state results from the individual's ability to wrest bliss from human circumstances, even the most trying ones. The soul's comprehension of, and response to, the harmonious coexistence of the inevitable components of the world constitute the poetic wisdom that is integral to all great poems. Poems produced by souls reflect man's mature understanding of, and response to life.

3

In the scheme of poets' education, outlined in the simile of human life and in the process of Soul-making, Keats clearly sets a scale by which he can measure his personal progress and that of others who seek the wisdom of poetic existence. Comparing his progress as of the time he wrote the simile of human life with Wordsworth's progress as of the time he wrote "Tintern Abbey," Keats maintains that he himself had progressed up the scale to the threshold of the chamber of Maiden-Thought's dark effect while

Wordsworth had attained the threshold of the chamber of Mature-Thought. Keats concedes greater maturity to Wordsworth as compared to himself on the basis of the fact that Wordsworth had started the mature task of lighting up the dark passages of the chamber of Maiden-Thought in order to embrace the profound truths of human life. He, of course, expresses confidence in his ability to advance to the stage of maturity; that is to say, he considered himself capable of attaining the Soul-state which, to him, Wordsworth was on the verge of attaining.

The need for a handy means of comparing his own achievements to those of Wordsworth was a major impetus in his formulation of the three-stage plan for the education of poets. He told Reynolds that he was establishing the scheme "in order to be explicit and show you how tall I stand by the giant";[84] the giant is of course Wordsworth. In a sense, his conception of the stages of human development, within the context of a poetic life, is influenced by Wordsworth's theory of his own development as a poet. His debt to Wordsworth has been correctly remarked by many critics. However, it seems that Robert Bridges was the first critic to note and analyze the similarities in the schemes established by Wordsworth and Keats by comparing passages from "Tintern Abbey" and "Sleep and Poetry."[85] De Selincourt, Claude Finney and Thora Balslev, following Bridges's lead, also discuss the discernible parallels in the stages of development established by both poets, noting that Keats restates Wordsworth's stages in "Sleep and Poetry."[86] But none of these critics mentions the presence of these three stages in Keats's simile of human life and in his speculations on Soul-making.

While Wordsworth's influence on Keats's theory of the poet's development is not in doubt, it is necessary to point out that the tendency in Keatsian scholarship to discuss Keats's stages as if they were a mere reproduction of Wordworth's theory is misleading.[87] What is important to note when comparing Keats's theory with that of Wordsworth is not just the similarities, or how successful Keats is in reproducing Wordsworth's stages, but Keats's idiosyncratic reaction to Wordsworth's scheme which results in a scheme that is in many ways different from, and better developed than Wordsworth's. It must be noted, for instance, that Wordsworth wrote "Tintern Abbey" in a retrospective mood while Keats's scheme in "Sleep and Poetry," the simile of human life, and the process of Soul-making was produced in an anticipatory mood. There is also no one to one correspondence between the stages of "coarser pleasures of boyhood," "the rapture of youth," and the "sombre pleasures" of age found in Wordsworth and the stages of "infant and thoughtless Chamber," "the Chamber of Maiden-Thought," and "the Chamber of Mature-Thought" found in Keats. The complex dual effect of the second stage in Keats's theory is absent from that of Wordsworth. The dark effect of Keats's chamber of Maiden-Thought seems completely and inconspicuously fused into Wordsworth's third stage of sombre pleasures. Furthermore, Wordsworth's obvious emphasis on age is absent from Keats's scheme because, in Keats's view, maturity comes by experience not by the mere passage of time. Wordsworth's scheme is also based mainly on the assumption of the poet's personal relationship with physical or elemental nature while the foundation of Keats's theory is broader. Finally, as Thora Balslev correctly observes, "Although both poets emphasize man as the central theme of thought and poetry, Keats's point of departure is founded on the artist's view. The development envisaged implies a strengthening of the creative power and an extension of the poetic vision."[88]

Keats himself was aware of the differences between his scheme and that of Wordsworth. Hence, having compared his achievements with those of Wordsworth, he proceeds to compare Wordsworth's claim to fame with Milton's--using the criteria offered in his simile of life as touchstone. This comparison immediately shows that he recognizes both poets as different kinds of genius. He maintains that Wordsworth's inclination was always in the direction of "martyring himself to the human heart" while Milton was inclined towards revealing the "epic passion of man."[89] Hence, Keats contends that Wordsworth "ministered to the needs of human Knowledge" while Milton fed man's religious instincts.[90]

In spite of the discernible difference that Keats remarks in the geniuses of Milton and Wordsworth, he proceeds with an "objective" assessment of each poet within his specific area of interest and in relation to his service to man generally. He argues that, insofar as Milton "did not think into the human heart as Wordsworth had done,"[91] "Wordsworth is deeper than Milton."[92] Wordsworth's profundity, in Keats's view, lies in his humanitarian concern--a concern which enables him to depict the agonies of human existence within the framework of the universal meaning of life. His Soul is thus a Soul that is devoted to consoling man by revealing the broader aims of life and man's noble qualities. On the other hand, Keats believes that Milton was also a profound philosopher whose concern for man arose from his desire to examine and justify the role of God in the world. Milton's attainment of Soul-state is seen as resulting from his ability to satisfy the religious needs of his generation. Hence, Keats concludes that "Milton as a Philosopher, had sure as great powers as Wordsworth."[93]

Keats does not assess only poets and their writings by the values set out in his developmental scheme. He also judges the quality of life led by other individuals who are not poets by the same standards because he believes that the scheme is practical. For instance, he believes that Souls are capable of wresting bliss from the most trying circumstances of life, and therefore expects all individuals who have attained personal Identities to exhibit a high level of spiritual and emotional resilience in the face of misfortune. "The first thing that strikes me on hearing of a Misfortune having befallen another is this--'Well, it cannot be helped--he will have the pleasure of trying the resources of his spirit,'"[93] Keats writes. This comment should not be understood as an apathetic attitude to the suffering of others. Rather, it is a confirmation of Keats's belief in the enormous spiritual resources at the disposal of those with personal Identities, resources that help them to overcome most ills in human life. A high degree of disinterestedness is part of the spiritual resources that Souls have. As Souls, individuals serve their fellow men selflessly, thereby questioning the validity of the assertion that "the motives of our worst Men are self interest and of our best Vanity."[94]

Since in his programme of Spirit-creation individuals who have attained personal Identities are noble (because they are free from self interest and vanity), Keats judges all great men, past or present, by this criterion. He writes, "Bailey is one of the noblest men alive at the present day . . .for that sort of probity and disinterestedness which such men as Bailey possess, does hold and grasp tip-top of any spiritual honours that can be paid to anything in this world."[95] Although he later modifies his evaluation of

Bailey, this statement highlights the qualities that he reveres in, and attributes to Souls. Yet, while his modified view of Bailey's character is less glowing than the initial one, Keats remains sympathetic to Bailey's shortcomings because he recognizes that "very few men have ever arrived at a complete disinterestedness of Mind: very few have been influenced by the pure desire of the benefit of others--in the great part of the Benefactors to Humanity, some meretricious motives have sullied their greatness."[96] Whatever modifications Keats makes to his earlier opinion of Bailey, the fact still remains that he willingly gives honour to his contemporaries who, in his opinion, possess personal Identities, and thus he demonstrates a faith in their worthiness to stand side by side with historical figures who have contributed by acts or works of their souls to human progress.

Implicitly comparing Bailey and Dilke, Keats expresses his disapproval of Dilke's fixed approaches to life: "Dilke was a man who cannot feel he has a personal Identity unless he has made up his mind about everything. Dilke will never come at a truth as long as he lives . . . he is a Godwin-methodist."[97] Dilke's state of mind, in the light of the Keatsian system of Soul-making, can be regarded as a product of arrested or stunted development, the only cure of which is "to make up one's mind about nothing--to let the mind be a thoroughfare for all things."[98]

To some extent, the kind of life which Keats attributes to Dilke is poetically represented by Apollonius's life in Lamia. His rather rigid approach to life causes him to destroy the bliss of Lycius and Lamia. He is insensitive to the changes which Lamia's love for Lycius has wrought in the serpent-woman's nature. For the rigid philosopher that Apollonius is, there cannot be changes in the affairs of men or gods that transcend the strict projections of his dry philosophical system. In his inhuman approach to life, Apollonius remains impervious to the charms of Lamia, and because of the strength of his character others are robbed of pleasures and Lycius is driven to death. Apollonius may have had good intentions in acting the way he did, but his lack of receptivity is a fault that can precipitate human disaster. Nevertheless, Lycius is himself caught in the dazzle of the chamber of Maiden-Thought, making his death partially related to his mal-adjustment to the dark effects of the chamber.

> Do not all charms fly
> At the mere touch of cold philosophy?
> . . . .
> Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
> Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
> Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine--
> Unweave the rainbow, as it erewhile made
> The tender-personed Lamia melt into shade.
> (Lamia, II, 229-230; 234-8)

This rather brief relation of the concerns in Lamia to Keats's system shows that most of his poems can be rewardingly studied as "allegories or parables" of the human spirit in quest of personal Identity. His fictional characters or personas represent individuals at various stages in the process of Soul-making. Characters like Apollonius are incapable of attaining personal Identities because their development has been arrested in the dark effect of the chamber of Maiden-Thought while characters like Lycius are violently hustled from the brightness to the darkness of the chamber. Lycius, overcome by the sudden change, dies without the chance of mastering the darkness and progressing towards the mellow brightness of the chamber of Mature-Thought. Lamia, in spite of her original serpent qualities, is a victim of Apollonius's action. She seems to realize the difference between the brightness and darkness of the chamber but is not able to survive Apollonius's attack because she has not attained the final stage or has not become a Soul. Chances of her attaining the Soul-state are, however, slim because her airy palace is built upon an illusion. Insofar as the genuineness of her actions is suspect, she is barred from the ultimate bliss enjoyed by Souls.

As has become more and more apparent in the course of this discussion, all human beings, according to Keats, have the potentialities of becoming Souls and of living poetic lives. Though these potentialities are not fully actualized in all men, those who attain the Soul-state are not restricted to living poetic lives by being engaged in a single field of human endeavour like the writing of poems or producing of works of art, because "As various as the lives of Men are--so various become their souls."[99] Hence, Keats's celebration of the achievements of political, religious, philosophical, and artistic giants in his works is in consonance with his belief that the ideals of his Soul-making system are at the core of most advances in all fields of human endeavour. Thus, Goldberg's assertion that "with egalitarianism, Keats makes poetry available to every one alike,"[100] is true in the sense that all human beings, no matter what their fields are, can live poetic lives or manifest the qualities of their souls.

In fact, Keats maintains that man's progress through all the ages is as a result of the activities of Souls, many of them unacclaimed. He writes, "I have no doubt that thousands of people, never heard of, had hearts completely disinterested."[101] For him, the truth is that many unacclaimed Souls have contributed their share to much from which the world benefits. It is therefore not too surprising that many great men die unrecognized while others who can "cut a figure without really being figurative"[102] receive laurels in their lifetime that posterity will eventually deny them. Some great men are even considered great for the wrong reasons. For example, Keats holds the view that Jesus Christ's true mission is awfully misunderstood by many because it is submerged "in pious frauds of Religion."[103]

He considers Christ and Socrates to be really disinterested in their service to mankind, not because they were too good to be human beings, but because they were able to actualize their potentialities and become Souls in the service of man. They had poetic Identities, led poetic lives, and served humanity even though they did not write poems or produce artistic works. Therefore, for Keats, human Salvation originates from a single source: "Seriously, I think it probable that this system of Soul-making--may have been the Parent of all the more palpable and personal schemes of Redemption among the Zoroastrians, the Christians and the Hindus."[104]

Thus, it is apparent that Keats's commitment to poetry amounts to an involvement in the totality of human existence. Art to him is life, and life is art. Therefore, in his poems and critical views, he strives to discover and reflect the springs of human life, the modes of self-actualization, and the rewards of an intense experiencing of the harmonious relations between the joys and agonies of life. Poetry for him transcends the mere craft of writing poems, entrancing luxuries, and a delight in sensuousness: it is a way of life, an expression of the Soul, a practical religion.

CHAPTER II

THE POETICAL CHARACTER

Disinterestedness is a major attribute of anyone who has attained Soul-state or acquired personal Identity through the successful completion of the Keatsian programme for the education of poets. This attribute helps the poetic individual to transcend his selfish interests in the vital quest for a true knowledge of the world and human existence, and in his inevitable relationships with other human beings. For Keats, Socrates and Jesus Christ are supreme examples of disinterested human beings who, because they had a profound understanding of man and his world, were able to render mankind great service by their noble lives and great teachings. Keats maintains that all great men like Socrates and Christ, whether they are acclaimed or not, have personal Identities that enable them to serve humanity selflessly.[1] Their service to man flows from the fountain of their intimate and unbiased knowledge of individuals' peculiarities, a knowledge acquired through relationships with others in which the distinctive characteristics of all those involved in the interactions are highlighted and then harmonized. They served their fellow men by being open-minded in their contacts with them.

Furthermore, Keats believes that the quality of disinterestedness which makes for the greatness of Souls or poetic individuals in their different fields of human endeavour is also manifest in the works of great poets. He maintains that it is this attribute that enables great poets like Shakespeare to suspend their personal interests while exploring and representing various subjects by means of the poetic medium. It is a state of mind which is usually responsible for the poet's successful encounter with his subject--an encounter in which the distinguishing character of the subject is captured and preserved in poetry. For Keats, any poet who is capable of effecting an artistic union with his subject, a union in which his selfish nature or ego is suspended in order to highlight the distinctive features of the subject, is a poetical character. Therefore, all poetical characters are great poets who have explored the chamber of Mature-Thought and can objectively represent their comprehensive vision of the world in art or poetry.

Keats conceives of the poetical character as the "dramatic Capability" of the poet. This "dramatic Capability" is the poet's self-effacing attribute which enables him to effect an intimate involvement with the distinguishing circumstances and individual characteristics of his subject. The poet, by being intimately involved in the essential being of his subject, abandons his individuality and becomes more or less his subject. Hence, Keats maintains that "the poetical character itself . . . is not itself--it is everything and nothing--it has no character."[2] Having abandoned its individuality, the poetical character is recognizable by the fact of its "being continually informing and filling some other Body--The Sun, the Moon, the Sea, and Men and women."[3]

Keats likens the activity of the poetical character to that of "certain ethereal Chemicals operating on the Mass of neutral intellect--but they have not any individuality, any determined character."[4] The poetical character, like the ethereal chemical, acts upon an object and the resultant reaction is the definition or realization of the distinctive nature of the subject while the poetical character or chemical remains unnoticeable. Keats also likens the poetical character to a chameleon.[5] Just as the chameleon changes its colour in response to the colour of objects or environments which it comes in contact with, so also does the poetical character change its colour or attribute to correspond with that of its subject. The cardinal quality of the poetical character is, therefore, the capability to assume the characteristics of the subject it seeks to represent. It is capable of changing from one subject to the other with as much ease as a chameleon changes its colours. This changeability is at the core of Keats's consideration of the poet "as the most unpoetical of anything in existence" because, in his view, poetical things or objects are unchangeable.[6]

The chameleon nature of the poetical character becomes even more obvious in Keats's comparison of the poetical character with the subjects whose characteristics it is capable of assuming. He establishes a contrast between it and the "top and head of those who have a proper self" or "Men of Power."[7] The poetical character, since it has no proper self, is the antithesis of a man of power whose selfhood is clearly defined. Moreover, Keats believes that the changeability of the poetical character distinguishes it from "The Sun, the Moon, the Sea" and also from "Men and Women who, as creatures of impulse, have about them an unchangeable attribute."[8] In the rigid characteristics of men and women of impulse and other unchangeable things, the poetical character finds something definite to assume or become. It can, by taking on the impulsive nature of men and women, become more or less those men and women.

Just as Keats conceives of the poetical character as antithetical to all that it can change into or become, so also does he conceive of it as different from the poet's individuality. He maintains that the poetical character differs from "the Wordsworthian or egotistical sublime" because the Wordsworthian ego "is a thing per se and stands alone."[9] The ego's individuality is basically unalterable, and analogous to the unchangeable quality of all men and women of impulse or men of power. The distinction between the poet's rigid identity and his poetical character lies in the fact that the poetical character, because of its variability, is fundamentally a kind of dramatic stance or role which the poet assumes in his approach to experience while his rigid identity is mainly a self-seeking quality that sets the poet apart from the rest of the world and makes him essentially impervious to change.

The poet's rigid identity is a normal quality of his being a human being. What is important, however, is that whenever the poet seeks a union or relationship with any subject other than himself, he must not allow his rigid identity or individuality to undermine his basic sensitivity to the peculiarities of the subject. In the first section of the poetical fragment which begins with "Where's the Poet?" Keats graphically depicts an unchangeable quality of the human poet. This quality is the selfish instinctual nature of the poet that is not much different from the instinctual nature of other living creatures. For Keats, the "uneducated poet" (that is the poet who has not become a poetical character or who has not progressed through the three Chambers of Thought) is

> . . . the man who [like] a man
>   Is an equal, be he King,
> Or the poorest of the beggar-clan,
>   Or any wondrous thing
> A man may be 'twixt ape and Plato;
>   'Tis the man who [like] a bird,
> Wren or Eagle, finds his way to
>   All [his] instincts. (3-10)

In his natural state, the poet like other human beings possesses a fire of self-awareness fuelled by the instincts or passions. This self-knowledge is, however, just a part of the "principle of consciousness"[10] awakened in the chamber of Maiden-Thought because consciousness, as Keats conceives of it in the scheme of Spirit-creation, results from the harmonious interaction of the human mind and heart in all processes of apprehension. Therefore, this kind of identity which is based on the instincts alone is quite different from the personal Identity of the Soul-state.

The poet's animal nature may be regarded as analogous to the Freudian Id[11] which is the raw heritage of all men at birth. This raw heritage becomes evident soon after a person is born because the Intelligence, as defined in Keats's theory of Soul-making, loses its god-like nature as soon as it comes in contact with the world by means of the human senses. Hence, the primary element of self-awareness is a kind of instinctual or animal consciousness that develops in the infant and thoughtless chamber. For Keats, the poet's animal nature is the basis of his instinctual self-awareness and necessary to his survival in the world, but an absolute reliance on it, in man's contact with others or the rest of the world, can result in the unsettling of the harmony of the world because the instincts are basically selfish and self-protecting. Essentially, if a poet's or human being's life is dominated by his selfish instincts, he views anything that he comes in contact with as food for his appetite. Hence, social life dominated by the instincts of individuals is comparable to that of the life of creatures in the wilds of nature. As Keats puts it, "The greater part of Men make their way with the same instinctiveness, the same unwavering eye for their purposes, the same animal eagerness as the Hawk."[12] Keats graphically represents the ultimate negative possibilities of the manifestation of man's self-seeking instincts in society from the "eternal fierce destruction" in nature where "The shark [is] at savage prey--the Hawk at pounce--/ The gentle Robin, like a Pard or Ounce/[Is] ravening a worm" ("To J. H. Reynolds, Esq.," 102-5).

Another facet of the poet's rigid selfhood which is more subtle in its manifestation than his animal eagerness is his ego. The ego is once again similar to the Freudian ego which is the individual's self-image formed through a a rational and emotional adaptation to the social codes of personal relationship within the society or what Freud calls the Super-ego.[13] While the Keatsian and Freudian concepts of the ego are fundamentally the same, the Keatsian view of the Super-ego (hinted at in the speculations on the nature of the chamber of Maiden-Thought) has a broader base than the Freudian. The Keatsian concept goes beyond mere social taboos[14] and embraces epistemological, metaphysical, and aesthetic perceptions of the world, man and society.

For Keats, the ego is another aspect of the self-seeking nature of the poet. In a sense, it is a product of an improper use of that rational element of consciousness which is awakened in the chamber of Maiden-Thought[15] for the purpose of evolving fixed ideas about the nature of man's life and the world. This negative manifestation of the rational element of consciousness is often evident in the poet's establishment of "systems" that support the sole existence of either a bright world of perpetual pleasures or a dark one of eternal agony--systems or ideas that reflect only one of the effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought. Erroneously convinced that his one-sided view of life is the universal truth, the self-seeking poet attempts to enshrine in poetry his partial perceptions of the world as universal or sublime truths. But, for Keats, such truths as originate from a partial knowledge of the world are "incomplete" because they are products of the self-seeking poet's "egotistically sublime identity."[16]

Since the ego informs most poets' attempts to impose their ideas on the subjects they depict in their poems, Keats conceives of the poetical character as the means by which a poet can overcome both the ills of his animal instincts and the improper manifestation of his ego. When he insists that the individuality or identity of the poet must be annihilated in the poet's reaction to the world around him, he means that the self-seeking elements of the poet's nature must not be allowed to serve as obstacles to his being able to become part of the life or objects around him. He must forgo his individuality in order to be in a position to understand his subject for what it really is.

For the poet to be able to encounter his subject in the proper manner, he must rise above his selfish nature through the changeability of the poetical character. He must set aside his rigid identity and partake of experiences and attributes that are different from his own. To understand his subject, he must be capable of participating in its existence as if it were his own, without necessarily imposing his life on the subject. This capability which is attained in the chamber of Mature-Thought is a part of the true poet's functioning as a poetical character. Keats also represents this ability of the poet in "Where's the Poet?" when he maintains that the poet is not only he who has been able "to find his way to all his instincts" but also he who "hath heard/The Lion's roaring, and can tell/What his horny throat expresseth/And to him the Tiger's yell/Comes articulate and presseth/On his ear like mother-tongue" (10-15). The poet can hear and understand the roaring of the lion and feel the articulate yell of the tiger as coming from his "mother tongue" only if he is able to forgo his set instinctive and egotistical identity and participate in the lives of the lion and the tiger. The "pressure" exerted on the poet by the tiger's yell makes it possible for the poet "to allow his personality melt"[17] and enables him to become part of the distinctive nature of the yelling tiger.

The dissolving of the poet's personality in response to the pressure from an external stimulus which is comparable to the "ethereal chemical's operation on the Mass of neutral intellect" is one of the modes of the poetical character's relation to its subject. In this mode of operation, the poet's self-annihilation depends largely upon the intensity of the external pressure. Keats writes about how the strong pressure from the Identities of other persons can cause his individuality to dissolve:

> When I am in a room with People if I ever am free from speculating on the creations of my brain, then not myself goes home to myself: but the identity of every one in the room begins so to press on me that I am in a very little time annihilated--not only among men; it will be the same in a Nursery of children.[18]

Even after the poet leaves the scene of these strong impressions, he is still able to feel the distinctively defined identities impressed upon him. In some instances, the identities of some individuals make just faint impressions on the poet because they are not yet strongly formed. "Fanny's character is not formed, her identity does not press on me as Georgiana's does,"[19] Keats writes.

While an unformed identity exerts an indistinct pressure on the poet, poorly formed identities exert weak and unpleasant pressures on him because they are unable to arouse his interest. Such weak impressions are not unpleasant because they are painful but because they make the poet uncomfortable. As Keats explains, "to be surrounded with unpleasant human identities; who press upon one just enough to prevent one from getting into a lazy position, and not enough to interest or rouse one; is a capital punishment for a capital crime."[20] If the poet's laziness is a capital crime, then to be besieged by weak impresssions is a punishment that is commensurate with the crime. Thus, the annihilation or loss of the poet's individuality is somewhat dependent on the intensity of the pressure from an external object or condition. The more intense the pressure, the more likely it is that the pressure will arouse the poet's interest and dissolve his selfish identity.

What Keats means by an unformed identity is, however, not quite clear. Yet, the fact that he regards Fanny Keats as having an unformed identity yields the possible meaning of what an unformed identity is. For Keats, an unformed identity has no definite or idiosyncratic approach to the world and human life. And since the formative stages of Spirit-creation are two, it is a fair guess that an unformed identity may be in the chamber of Maiden-Thought. The unformed personality may be experiencing the bright effects of the chamber and exhibiting distinctive signs that point to the fact that it is capable of becoming a Soul at a later stage of development. Also, what Keats means by a poorly formed identity is unclear. He does not identify any particular person who has a poorly formed identity, but it is obvious that a poorly formed character is not quite the same as a negatively strong personality like Apollonius. Rather, it seems to have a pale or confused quality of some definite approach to the world--a confused quality that points to the fact that the poorly formed identity cannot become a Soul, even at a later stage of development. The shadowy nature of its experience of the two effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought may prevent the ill-formed identity from progressing towards the chamber of Mature-Thought. It is, therefore, not surprising that Keats believes that the poorly formed identity demands some extra effort of the imagination and will from any poet who seeks to understand it or capture its distinguishing attributes in art or poetry.

Nevertheless, the poet is not a mere passive victim of the strong pressures from external stimuli because Keats maintains that the poet's interest must be aroused enough to enable him set aside his individuality. And yet, it is possible that a very strong impression becomes almost inescapable. Keats's reaction to Tom's anguished identity illustrates this point even though his concern may have originated from a sense of moral obligation to serve his own brother:

> Tom's identity presses upon me so all day that

> I am obliged to go out--and although I intended to have given some time to study alone, I am obliged to write, and plunge into abstract images to ease myself of his countenance, his voice and his feebleness--so I live in a continued fever--it must be poisonous to life although I feel well.[21]

Keats feels the anguish of Tom's plight as if it were his own. He cannot escape the strong pressure from his brother's identity and is more or less condemned to live in a continued fever even though he feels well. The poetical character can be faced with this dilemma of Keats if the external stimulus is irresistible.

Another interesting capability of the poetical character can be illustrated from Keats's reaction to the agonizing existence of his brother. By absorbing Tom's life into his own, Keats seems to be living two different lives simultaneously. His consciousness of the palpable reality of Tom's identity is as real as his consciousness of his own life with its ambitions and efforts to ease out of Tom's strong identity. Though Keats feels Tom's anguish as intensely as Tom himself does, yet he retains a consciousness of himself that is separate from that of Tom. Therefore, even in the poetical character's "complete" involvement in the identity of an object, experience, or person, it retains a measure of self-consciousness that makes the identity of the other object or person more obvious. This measure of self-knowledge that persists at the moment of the poet's absorption in his subject can be called "dramatic self-consciousness" because it is different from the poet's selfish personality. Put in the language of Keats's comparison of the poetical character and the chameleon or ethereal chemical, the self-awareness of the poet is the chameleon without its colour or the chemical which is not reacting upon the "Mass of neutral intellect."

The self-knowledge of the poet as distinguished from his rigid or selfish identity is discernible in many other examples of Keats's participation in the lives of other creatures or objects. While his statement that "if a sparrow [comes] before [his] window [he takes] part in its existence and picks about the Gravel"[22] is a practical demonstration of the poetical character's ability to participate in existences other than its own, it also demonstrates the self-consciousness of the poet. Even at the very moment Keats takes part in the sparrow's life, he is aware of his own different existence. In fact, this consciousness of his own life is a necessary condition for his taking part in the life of the sparrow. Similarly, his thrill in lying awake one night and "listening to the Rain with a sense of being drown'd and rotted like a grain of wheat"[23] lies both in his participation in the experience of the grain of wheat and in his consciousness of such an activity, even though this self-knowledge is relegated to the background. Furthermore, the feeling of the possibility of a billiard ball deriving a sense of delight from its own roundness[24] is only possible because of Keats's consciousness of this feeeling.

The sense of an unobtrusive self-awareness that accompanies self-annihilation in the poetical character's relation to external objects is at the core of Keats's assertion that it is impossible to "annihilate self completely."[25] Although he qualifies this assertion by indicating that he is neither magnanimous nor old enough to be able to annihilate selfhood completely, he believes in a fundamental survival of self-consciousness at the moment of poetic union with a subject. Also, his declaration that "Dilke was a Man who cannot feel he has a personal identity unless he has made up his Mind about everything"[26] suggests that there is another kind of identity that is based on a poet's feeling of his own separate existence. The truth of self-consciousness does not contradict Keats's consideration of the poetical character as an entity without a defined identity. In fact, it lends empirical reality to the function of the poetical character by guaranteeing the reality of the poet and the external or imagined stimulus.

Keats's attitude to death is coloured by his desire to retain a measure of feeling even after death. He cannot welcome death as a condition of absolute annihilation but he will welcome it if it can heighten the purposefulness of his life: "I am never alone without rejoicing that there is such a thing as death--without placing my ultimate in the glory of dying for a great human purpose."[27] He is willing to die for a great human purpose because death will guarantee him a link with life. However, if death does no more than condemn man to nothingness, then Keats calls it "the divorcer forever."[28] Extreme pain will not even compel him to choose death that snuffs out all feelings: "I wish for death every day and night to deliver me from these pains, and then I wish death away, for death could destroy even those pains which are better than nothing."[29] The ideal kind of death for Keats is that in which an individual is still able to have a feeling of his own existence. It is a kind of death in which a sense of self-awareness persists, a death that is perhaps analogous to that which he describes in his comment on Kean's dramatic performance in "Richard Duke of York":

> Kean's death was very great. But Kean "always dies as erring men do die." The bodily functions wither up, and the mental faculties hold out till they crack. It is extinguishment, not decay. The hand is agonized in death; the lip trembles with the last breath, as we see the autumn leaf thrill in the cold wind of evening.[30]

It is the feeeling of death that fascinates Keats and not death itself. Kean's self-knowledge is retained in this acting of death.

Keats's revulsion for the possibility of a lack of sensation in death is so great that it is difficult to accept D. G. James's assertion that "we cannot doubt the sincerity of Keats's desire for death in the sonnet 'Why did I laugh to-night?'"[31] James argues that Keats, overcome by his encounter with life's agonies and the realization of the limitations in man's aspirations towards the ideal realms, sought refuge from these agonies in death: "Death is intense and the high meed of life. This longing for death is the recognition of the insurmountable walls by which life is encompassed, of the boundary beyond which we cannot see, still less tread."[32] James's argument is, however, based on a rather superficial reading of the following lines of the sonnet:

> Yet would I on this very midnight cease,
> And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds;
> Verse, Fame and Beauty are intense indeed,
> But Death intenser--Death is Life's high meed.
> (11-14)

In this sonnet, Keats is willing to die if death conforms to his peculiar definition of it. Death for him must be intense. In fact, it must be intenser than verse, fame and beauty which to him are sources of great intensity in this world. Keats's idea of intensity presupposes great sensation and not the lack of sensation that death entails. He once remarked that his ideal mode of existence is that of bearing "unhurt the shock of extreme thought and sensation without weariness"; a mode of existence which he prefers to that of "striving to be nothing."[33] Death, in the context of this sonnet, paradoxically includes the kinds of sensation that Keats always desires. Hence, he can justifiably regard it as more intese than verse, fame and beauty. Furthermore, he considers his laughing at the moment of great mortal pain as an emotional and spiritual pointer to a special kind of death in which sensations are heightened rather than eliminated. Therefore, the death he seeks in "Why did I laugh to-night?" is quite different from that which James implies in his comment on the sonnet.

The characteristic self-awareness which Keats considers necessary to the poetical character's activities is also evident in his own surrender to pleasures. In the sixth stanza of the "Ode to a Nightingale," for instance, Keats recoils from the ultimate pleasures offered by the nightingale's song because of his fear of a possible self-annihilation.

> Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
>   I have been half in love with easeful Death,
> Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
>   To take into the air my quiet breath;
> Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
>   To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
>   While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
>   In such an ecstasy!
> Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain--
>   To thy high requiem become a sod.

In this stanza, as indeed is the case in the entire poem, Keats's self-consciousness serves as a bridge between his absorption in the song of the nightingale and his hold on the world of stark realities.

The song of the bird is fully realized in its authentic beauty, and yet his unobtrusive selfhood remains undestroyed. Fogle's recognition of the high premium which the poet places on the survival of self-consciousness in all encounters with external reality makes him suggest that too much can sometimes be made of Keats's death-wish in the "Ode to a Nightingale." He observes that the imaginative escape offered by death in the ode is more apparent than real, and that death may be comparable to any state that releases the poet from the prisoning self. Hence, he concludes that "The acceptance of death in the ode includes the reservation, since it is an acceptance of the limits as well as the freedoms of death. Death's meaning shifts from the most heightened consciousness to blank oblivion, and what seemed pure spirit is sheer inert mass."[34] The poet's recoil from the possible extinction that is inherent in the pleasures of the nightingale's song represents the poetical character's mature reaction to situations that may spell the absence of sensation, making the recoil an assertion of the poet's undying sense of self in encounters with artistic subjects.

Keats's conception of the nature of the poetical character bears a strong imprint of the self-awareness that remains indestructible when poets are absorbed in intense experiences. The poetic self-consciousness does not only survive annihilation when the poet's individuality dissolves in response to external stimuli, it also survives his conscious or imaginative involvement in situations. Essentially, it is a force behind the poet's assumption of various dramatic roles or stances which ensures that he does not confuse his assumed nature with his real one, mistake fiction for reality, or substitute art for life. The survival of the poet's unobtrusive selfhood--by guaranteeing a special kind of relationship between him and his subject and preventing his "complete" loss in his subject--highlights what Saito rightly refers to as "Keats's desire for objectivity in the Romantic era of subjectivity."[35]

It must be stressed that the poet's ability to assume different roles, a tribute to the poetical character's changeability, does not detract from the reality or sincerity of the roles assumed because the entire being of the poet is usually engrossed in the roles. The sincerity of the poet's emotional involvement in the roles makes them real. Hence, it can be argued that Keats's defence of a statement he made to Woodhouse about his intention to give up the writing of poems derives its sincerity from the truth of the roles that a poetical character assumes. The reality of the poetical character's activities also raises Keats's changeability above sheer fickleness since his earlier statement was probably made from one of his assumed roles:

> If then the poetical character has no self, and if I am a Poet, where is the wonder that I should say that I would write no more? Might I not at that very instant have been cogitating on the Charaters of Saturn or Ops? It is a wretched

> thing to confess; but it is a very fact that not one word I ever utter can be taken for granted as an opinion growing out of my identical nature--how can it when I have no nature?[36]

Despite Keats's surrender to the emotions and lives of Saturn and Ops, he still retains an awareness of the fact that he is "cogitating." His role as Saturn or Ops does not absolutely annihilate his own existence even though his rigid identity is dissolved. His contention that he, being a poet who might have been cogitating on the characters of Saturn or Ops when he said that he "would write no more," should surprise no discerning critic because he insists that nothing he says should be taken "for granted as an opinion growing out of his identical nature." By this assertion, Keats is appealing to the reader to take into account the contexts in which various statements are made, or to consider the particular role which a poet assumes before he can come to valid conclusions about the worth of any work of art or statement. Since the poetical character is capable of assuming many different roles, it is imperative that the contexts of his statements must be the the guide to the truth of any role.

The reality of a poet's assumed role contrasts with the false roles that Keats once attributed to pretentious parsons. He once said that "A parson is continually acting, he is a Lamb in the drawing room and a Lion in the vestry."[37] He believes that since the "notion of the Society will not permit a parson to give way to his temper in any shape--he festers in himself"[38] and therefore, his assumed roles are untrue to his real nature and are mere hypocritical reactions to social expectations or the dictates of the Super-ego. Keats recognizes that the parson's action springs from human weakness but condemns him all the same as "either a knave or an idiot"[39] for not being true to himself and also for his apparent confusion of fiction and reality. The false parson's insincerity when examined against the background of the scheme of Spirit-creation can be regarded as a product of the parson's inability to resolve the apparently contradictory claims of the two elements of his consciousness (the head and the heart), claims that are highlighted in the chamber of Maiden-Thought. The parson's failure to discern a concordant relation between the head and the heart constitutes an unfortunate dilemma that bars him from the attainment of Soul-state, or from the objectivity of the poetical character. A poetical character is free from the parson's predicament because its comprehensive knowledge always guarantees its being true to its nature even in the assumption of the lives of its subjects. It neither mistakes its role for its personal identity nor acts to falsify a particular state of affairs. Therefore, it can become a lion or lamb effectively because its immediate concern is to be a lion or lamb and no more.

The sincerity of the poet in participating in actual or imagined situations is basic to the proper functioning of the poetical character. Keats's sincere and passionate involvement in the artistic scenes that he reads about illustrates his devotion to the emotions evoked by the scenes. He talks about his life in the imaginative worlds which he creates or recreates out of other artistic works:

> I feel more and more every day, as my imagination strengthens, that I do not live in this world alone but in a thousand worlds. No sooner am I alone than shapes of epic greatness are stationed around me and serve my Spirit the office of which is equivalent to a King's body guard--then "Tragedy with specter'd pall, comes sweeping by." According to my state of mind I am with Achilles shouting in the Trenches, or with Theocritus in the Vales of Sicily. Or I throw my whole being into Troilus and repeating these lines, "I wander like a lost Soul upon Stygian Banks staying for waftage," I melt into the air with a voluptuousness so delicate that I am content to be alone.[40]

The real emotions that are present in Keats's participation in the epic scenes he imaginatively recreates makes them real to the reader. His ability to melt into the air with voluptuousness is in consonance with the poetical character's selfless approach to poetic situations. These scenes, unlike the external scenes or objects that exert some pressure on the poet, are deliberately conjured up by the poet. The poet, by recreating such situations as are represented in these epic scenes and by engaging his entire being in them, manifests his dramatic capability.

Keats believes that the poetical character's assumption of various roles must be sincere. His comment on Kean's dramatic performances reveals the high premium that he places on the passionate honesty of the poetic "performer":

> "In our unimaginative days,"--Habeas Corpus'd as we are out of all wonder, curiosity, and fear;--in these fireside, delicate, gilded days,--these days of sickly comfort, we feel grateful to Mr. Kean for giving us some excitement by his old passion in one of the old plays. He is a relict of romance; a posthumous ray of chivalry and always seems just arrived from the camp of Charlemagne. In Richard he is his sword's cousin; in Hamlet his footing is germain to the platform. In Macbeth his eyes laugh siege to scorn; in Othello he is welcome to Cyprus. In Timon he is of the palace--of Athens--of the woods, and is worthy to sleep in a grave "which once a day with its embossed froth, the turbulent surge doth cover."[41]

For Keats, Kean's performances reflect activities of the poetical character on the stage. Kean is able to forgo his individual passion and take on the "old passion" which is relevant to the enactment of the concerns of the "old plays." The old passion, brought into existence by Kean in the "modern" theatre, makes the performer a part of the camp of Charlemagne. Kean's performances capture the essential lives of all the characters he represents in the plays. He is by turn Macbeth, Hamlet, and Othello. He neither confuses his various roles nor lets his individual nature detract from a full representation of the character he becomes in any play. Nevertheless, as "he delivers himself up to the instant feeling without a shadow of thought about anything else," he is still able to feel "his being as deeply as Wordsworth, or any other intellectual monopolists."[42]

The poet's feeling of his own being or awareness of his selfhood at the moment of surrendering himself to the instant feeling must not in any way prevent him from a thorough exploration and representation of the instant feeling. By concentrating on his subject, the poet is able to acquire an intimate knowledge of it. While delivering himself up to the instant, the poet is not cheated into believing that his subject's life has been permanently substituted for his own. He is aware of the fact that he is exercising what Bernice Slote calls a kind of "dramatic ambivalence" that enables him "to leave his egotistical home [and] dwell in the home of his subject."[43] The poet's ability to dwell in the various homes of his subjects as circumstances may dictate, also helps him to overcome any doubts or misgivings and aids him in concentrating upon, and exploring the homes. Keats calls this ability of the poet to concentrate on his subjects in spite of doubts, "Negative Capability":

> Negative Capability is when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without irritably reaching after fact and reason. Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the Penetralium of mystery, for being incapable of remaining content with half knowledge.[44]

Shakespeare's profound achievements as an artist, in

Keats's view, can be traced to his Negative Capability. His genius is an objective one which is capable of reflecting its subject as a mirror does[45] even as it is fully engrossed in the subject's peculiar existence. This kind of objective genius which Keats associates with Shakespeare contrasts with the subjective type of genius that shapes and colours its subject[46] in accordance with the genius's nature or its egotistical beliefs. For Keats, Wordsworth and Coleridge, among others of his contemporaries, sometimes exhibit qualities of subjectivism.

Another important element in the approach of the objective genius, which Keats also discerns in Shakespeare, is the ability to concentrate on a subject and explore it thoroughly and completely, without being distracted by extraneous considerations or attempts to fit the subject into a rigid philosophical system. The poet's total concentration on the subject helps him to capture its distinguishing characteristics and may lead him to the discovery of new truths about the subject. Keats holds the view that a great measure of self-confidence is required by any poet who wishes to explore successfully any subject which he has no more than a half-knowledge about: "Many a man can travel to the very bourne of heaven, and yet lack the courage to put down his half-seeing."[47] The poetic recording of half-knowledge or half-seeing is not incongruent with the Keatsian poetics. As long as the poet recognizes the limitations of the knowledge or vision portrayed, and honestly reveals these limitations to the reader, he can be seen as one engaged in the continuous process of the exploration of the truth of the world and of human life. For instance, the experiencing of either the dark or bright effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought can be portrayed in all its intensity and yet purged of all suggestions that one of these effects represents the true and only vision of the nature of the world. Hence, this element of poetic intensity, evident in the poet's sincere and passionate involvement in his subject, can invariably lead to the creation of what for Keats is "the Beauty which overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all considerations."[48]

Keats regards Coleridge's inability to concentrate on a subject long enough to enable him explore it fully as an undesirable quality which sets him apart from Shakespeare. Bate is, however, needlessly uncomfortable about the distinction Keats makes in his notion of Negative Capability between the genius of Shakespeare and that of Coleridge. He writes, "The mention of Coleridge's allowing 'a fine isolated verisimilitude' to 'go by' seems ludicrously inept. However much Coleridge yearned for a system, he never could attain it simply because he was able to let so little 'go by'; and the glory of his critical writing consists in its numerous 'isolated verisimilitudes.'"[49] Keats does not lay emphasis on Coleridge's "allowing 'a fine isolated verisimilitude to go by'" but on Coleridge's not being able to achieve complete involvement in those "numerous isolated verisimilitudes" that Bate hails as the glory of his critical writing. The mere crowding together of numerous ideas, in Keats's view, hardly satisfies the poetical character's yearning for a full concentration upon, and exploration of an idea as a means of capturing its distinctive texture. Muir--in recognition of the correctness of Keats's belief that Coleridge lacks total concentration or absorption in each of his isolated ideas, a belief expressed in Keats's speculations on Negative Capability--concludes that "The idea of Negative Capability really illuminates the difference between Shakespeare and Coleridge."[50]

It is interesting to note, however, that part of Coleridge's view on the nature of the imagination is in consonance with Keats's idea of the nature of the poetical character. Coleridge maintains that the poet has the capability "To become all things and yet remain the same, to make the changeful God to be felt in the river, the lion and the flame."[51] Nevertheless, Keats's contention is that the changeful God of Coleridge is probably a God that is unchangeable and by making itself felt in all things seems more or less to impose itself on all that it comes in contact with. He also suggests that instead of the changeful God becoming "a power for objectifying oneself" in Coleridge's works, it often becomes a power which prevents the poet from a thorough exploration of his subjects. To Keats, because the Coleridgean changeful God manifests itself poorly in Coleridge's works, the reader is very often left with a feeling of having not been admitted by the poet into the entire experience.

Since Keats's assertion that Coleridge lacks Negative Capability is unsubstantiated by references to particular works or passages, Muir--agreeing with Finney's opinion--suggests that Keats's "penetrating criticism of Coleridge may have originated from Hazlitt's review of _Biographia Literaria_"[52] in which Hazlitt claims that Coleridge's metaphysics "have been a dead weight on the wings of his imagination."[53] Yet, it is possible that Keats's view may have originated from his assessment of what Coleridge said in one of his discussions with him. For instance, his belief that Coleridge's dogmatism and lack of concentration on his subject is characteristic, may have arisen from the manner in which Coleridge discussed numerous topics in one of their conversations:

> I walked with Coleridge . . . . for near two miles I suppose. In those two miles he broached a thousand things--let me see if I can give you a list--Nightingales, Poetry--on Poetical sensation--Metaphysics--Different genera of

> Dreams--Nightmare--a dream accompanied by a sense of touch--single and double touch--A dream related--first and second consciousness--the difference explained between will and Volition--so many metaphysicians with a want of smoking the second consciousness--Monsters--the Kraken--Mermaids--Southey believes in them--Southey's belief too much diluted--A Ghost story --Good morning--I heard his voice as he came towards me--I heard it as he moved away--I heard it all the interval--if it may be called so.[54]

The possibility of Coleridge's being able to deal with these topics in depth to satisfy Keats's craving for a complete absorption in each of them is very remote. Whether he gained anything from the discussion or not, it is obvious that Coleridge's method convinced Keats of the fact that he lacked Negative Capability. In fact, his reaction to this discussion is reminiscent of his unfavourable reaction to the "unpleasant identities that press upon one just enough to prevent one from getting into a lazy position, and not enough to interest or rouse one."[55]

Keats conceives of Negative Capability as an invaluable aid to the critic in his attempts to uncover the great truths in works of art. For him, the critic cannot fully understand any work without concentrating on the experience that is depicted and the circumstances that engendered the experience. Therefore, he suggests that the critic, employing the attribute of the poetical character, must faithfully follow the path which the poet has gone through in the creation of the work as a means of gaining an intimate knowledge of the subject and as an aid to achieving the measure of objectivity that is necessary for a proper assessment of the work. In his reading of Milton's works, Keats demonstrates a rare sense of concentration on what Milton depicts, and is able to discover the various religious assumptions that underlie the poems:

> In [Milton's] time englishmen were just emancipated from a great superstition, and Men had got hold of certain points and resting places in reasoning which were too newly born to be doubted, and too much opposed by the Mass of Europe not to be thought etherial and authentically divine--who could gainsay his ideas on virtue, vice and Chastity in Comus just at the time of the dismissal of Cod-pieces and a hundred other disgraces? who would not rest satisfied with his hintings on good and evil in Paradise Lost when just free from the inquisition and burning in Smithfield? The reformation produced some immediate and great benefits, that Protestantism was considered under the immediate eye of heaven, and its own remaining Dogmas and superstitions, then, as it were, regenerated, constituted those resting places and seeming points of Reasoning--from what I have mentioned, Milton, whatever he may have thought in the sequel, appears to have been content with these by his writings. What is then to be inferr'd? It proves that providence subdues the mightiest Minds to the service of the time being [as Milton's mind is subdued to the service of] the Religion [of his time].[56]

In this comment, Keats tries to understand the historical conditions that produced the Religion which Milton adopts as the foundation of his works. As a critic who is conscious of historical perspectives, he is not unaware of the dogmatic nature of some of the religious views as he endeavours to live imaginatively in Milton's era in order to be in a position to see the works in their proper setting. His self-consciousness, manifest in his knowledge of the religious beliefs of his own time, serves as a useful basis for comparing both eras. He neither attempts to judge Milton by his personal standards nor Milton's Age by the standards of the Romantic Age.

As a poetical character, Keats transcends his personal identity and becomes an active part of the essential life in _Paradise Lost_. His comment on the scene where Satan enters the serpent (_Paradise Lost_, IX, 179-191) illustrates what he considers to be the correct critical approach to artistic experience. He fathoms the depths of Satan's life within his serpent-prison and feels the sense of suffocation which the devil must have experienced:

> Satan, having entered the Serpent, and inform'd his brutal sense--might seem sufficient but Milton goes on "_but his sleep disturb'd not_." Whose spirit does not ache at the smothering confinement--the unwilling stillness--the "_waiting close_?" Whose head is not dizzy at the possible speculations of Satan in the serpent prison--no passage of poetry ever can give a greater pain of suffocation.[57]

By entering into the thoughts and feelings of the Satan (as Milton did when he wrote the poem), Keats is able to reveal the aching emotions of Satan and bring the possibility of the Satan's feeling of suffocation near the everyday experience of the reader. The revelation of the emotions that accompany Satan's confinement is only posssible through an undistracted concentration on the plight of Satan. For Keats, critics must possess and utilize this complete empathy (which poets themselves have) in the assessment of various works of art. Hence, he was dissatisfied with Hazlitt's rather casual and unsympathetic criticism of Wordsworth's "Gipsies."[58]

Keats's participation in the life of the imprisoned Satan raises a major question about the moral status of a poetical character. Since the Satan in Milton's Paradise Lost is supposed to be an embodiment of evil within the scheme of the epic, the moral status of a poetical character that can take part in a life that is supposedly evil becomes suspect. One is forced to ask whether the poetical character's unusual capability to be anything at will cannot, at the moment of its identifying with an evil character, become inadvertently an evil or immoral influence. The moral stature of the poetical character is not enhanced by Keats's assertion that it "enjoys light and shade, be it fair or foul, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated" or by his declaration that "What shocks the virtuous philosopher delights the chameleon Poet" because the "poetical character has as much delight in conceiving an Iago and an Imogen."[59] Yet, Keats insists that the poetical character "does no harm from its relish of the dark side of things any more than from its taste for the bright" because it "lives in gusto."[60]

Keats believes that the poetical character's delight in all things is morally harmless because the life of gusto, being the source of Beauty, transcends narrow moral considerations.[61] In Keats's view, the life of gusto represents the poetical character's participation in what Hazlitt, in his essay titled "On Gusto," terms "the power or passion defining an object."[62] The issue of the moral state of the power or passion defining a poetic subject is of secondary importance to the poet because his immediate concern is not with the philosophical, social or religious basis for the life of the subject. In fact, to be distracted from a complete establishment of the distinctive identity of a subject by such secondary considerations as morality is, in Keats's poetics, tantamount to a lack of Negative Capability. The poet's sole aim, at the moment of sympathetic or empathic involvement in the circumstances and qualities defining any subject, must always be the discovery and revelation, through poetic portrayal, of the "living principle of power or passion"[63] which determines the character of his subject. The mere revelation of the distinguishing characteristics of a subject, be they good or bad, does not necessarily contribute to or subtract from the subject's basic evil or good nature. How then, Keats would ask, could such revelations made by the poetical character do any harm or good? Or how could the aesthetic participation in the dark or bright side of things, represented in the chamber of Maiden-Thought, do any harm or good?

It is, therefore, not surprising that Keats holds the view that a poet's intimate artistic involvement in the life of a character like Iago does not necessarily imply his support of Iago's villiany. Hence, it is untenable to argue that since Keats considers Milton's effective portrayal of Satan to be capable of making Satan live again whenever Paradise Lost is read[64]--a view which is analogous to Blake's belief that Milton "was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it"[65]--he considers Milton an accomplice in the "crimes against humanity" that Satan is supposed to have committed. What Blake and Keats commend in Milton is his imaginative enlivening of Satan's nature and activities--an imaginative enlivening which has nothing to do with Milton's moral attitude towards the Satan. To make an incident come forcefully to life or to demonstrate the reality of a situation in graphic terms has nothing to do with its moral character. The life of gusto which for Keats is part of the poetical character's changeability is an artistic or aesthetic mode of existence in which the "sense of Beauty overcomes every other consideration, or obliterates all considerations."[66] A life of gusto is a life of "high sensation" aimed at enhancing speculation and not at stating or supporting definite moral points of view.[67]

For Keats, the poetical character's ability to concentrate on fair and foul lives or characters enables it to elevate all intense human passions to a level in which beauty is the only concern. As he puts it, "our Passions . . . are all in their sublime, creative of essential Beauty."[68] Sublime passions in this context are intense passions that define an object and only this kind of passions can create beauty. Therefore, if beauty is the ultimate concern of the poetical character's activities and not good or bad in the ordinary ethical sense, then it follows that the sense of passionate sublimity that creates the beauty can be called a form of moral sublimity. This kind of moral sublimity is what Keats attributes to Kean in his performances of the roles of Luke in Riches or the Wife and Brother and Othello in Othello.

Keats declares that Kean's return to Drury Lane "was full of Power,"[70] a power by which Kean animates the various characters that he plays by projecting his sentience into them. Though the characters of Luke and Othello differ, Luke being "the utmost of quiet" and Othello "the utmost of turbulence,"[71] Kean is able to bring out their identities so effectively as to make them real to the audience. Luke's moral torpidity is highlighted by Kean on the stage. Keats says of Kean, "He is in no trouble to deaden his conscience."[72] On the stage, it is necessary that Kean should deaden his personal conscience in order to act like Luke and reveal the quaint workings of Luke's mind that the playwright has captured in his work. That Kean is able to arouse in his audience such feelings as Luke would arouse in them in real life neither makes Kean a supporter of Luke's actions nor suggests that he is appealing to his audience to live like Luke. The audience is also aware that Kean's actions spring from a drama in which a sense of objective reality is represented on the stage, and therefore will not hold Kean guilty of the moral lapses of Luke. In like manner, readers are usually cognizant of the moral status of the poetical character, no matter what characters it represents.

Kean, by heightening the passions attendant on Luke's "pride, cruelty and avarice," raises the pasions to a sublime intensity which is creative of the essential beauty of art. The force with which such passions as Kean arouses strikes an intimate cord in the sentient consciousness of the audience is what Keats calls "power." And for Keats, this power is identical with gusto.[73] Speaking of the effect of Kean's elocution on the audience, Keats maintains that "There is an indescribable gusto in his voice by which we feel that the utterer is thinking of the past and future while speaking of the instant."[74] Keats singles out a number of passages from Othello which he considers to have gained new life from Kean's elocution. In his view, "The sensual life of verse springs warm from the lips of Kean,"[75] and in making the audience feel the warm life of verse, Kean--in his dramatic capacity--does no harm morally because he lives in gusto, a kind of life that is based on moral sublimity.[76]

Keats's concurrence with Hazlitt's view that "the language of poetry naturally falls in with the language of power"[77] also supports his conception of the poet's life in gusto, a life raised above narrow moral considerations. He agrees with Hazlitt's point that human beings "read with pleasure the ravages of a beast of prey" because they are often fascinated by the "sense of power abstracted from the sense of good."[78] For Keats, the captivating spell cast on the reader by powerful actions or passions in a poem easily leads the reader to the appreciation of the beauty of depictions, without his "irritably reaching after fact or reason" connected with ethical principles.[79] Effectively depicted in art, intense experiences invite nothing but a passionate participation in their beauty. Keats's approval of the intimate human passions that are brought into play by "a quarrel in the street" is based on the principle of power or beauty that underlies intense occurrences: "Though a quarrel in the Street is a thing to be hated, the energies displayed in it are fine; the commonest Man shows grace in his quarrel."[80]

Even in Keats's hints on the ethical principles involved in the poetical character's "relish of the dark side of things," there is an unmistakable assumption that the poet's obtrusive individuality must not be allowed to lure him from a complete exploration of the subject. It is often the egotistical identity that imposes extraneous requirements on the poet. Keats advises Shelley to curb his rigid sense of "magnanimity, and be more of an artist, and load every rift with ore."[81] The ore of poetry is a product of an effective concentration on the subject in spite of all other considerations. Keats can, therefore, consider himself to be confident in being able to "judge the dramatic effects" of a work--effects which many of his comtemporaries in his view regard as Mammon because to them the "proper" purpose of a work is "God." Contrary to his contemporaries' belief, Keats insists that "An artist must serve Mammon, he must have self-concentration--selfishness perhaps."[82] He can confidently advise Shelley "to serve Mammon" because he believes that Mammon reprensents a life of gusto which transcends moral requirements.

The selfishness or self-concentration which Keats advocates must not be confused with the negative instinctual or egotistical ideas of the poet because, in a sense, his advice to Shelley regarding the curbing of his magnanimity is an advice against the obtrusive tendencies of rigid identities. This kind of selfishness is different from the "Wordsworthian or egotistical sublime which is a thing per se and stands alone" because it is changeable. It is a selfishness which enables the poet to concentrate on his subject or to become his subject without imposing his personal qualities or moral ideas on it. It is a dramatic selfishness since its power and life are absorbed in any subject the poet deals with. Keats considers Wordsworth deficient in this kind of objective selfishness. He suggests that in many of Wordsworth's poems, the moral views and personality of the poet are obtrusive and detract from the gusto of the subjects. However, Keats is not blind to the achievements of Wordsworth. He considers The Excursion a great thing in the world,[83] admits "Wordsworth is deeper than Milton" in his ability to "think into the human heart,"[84] and declares that he is one of the "Great Spirits" then alive that "will give the world another heart/And other pulses" ("Addressed to [Haydon]," 1; 10-11).

In spite of his appreciation of Wordsworth's greatness in certain spheres of artistic endeavour, Keats realizes that Wordsworth "can sometimes be too dogmatic"[85] in his poems. He writes, "It may be said that we ought to read our contemporaries, that Wordsworth & c. should have their due from us. But for the sake of a few imaginative and domestic passages, are we to be bullied into a certain Philosophy engendered in the whims of an Egotist?"[86] His consideration of Wordsworth's relation to his audience as that of bullying, harsh though it may sound, aptly states his objection to any poet's attempt to impose his ideas on the reader. His contention is that if the poet is able to capture the idiosyncratic identity of his subject through a passionate involvement in its existence, the reader will willingly share the experience with the poet. For Keats, Wordsworth's poems sometimes do not have the "power" that arouses the passions of the reader. What happens is that Wordsworth seems to be in the habit of wanting to tell the reader about the passion or power of his subject without letting the power or passion of the subject show itself.

Moreover, Keats maintains that Wordsworth's effort to tell the reader about the subject makes the ideas extraneous components of the subject, leaving the reader with the impression that the ideas are the poet's personal prejudices. As Balslev correctly points out, when Keats remarks that "We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us,"[87] it is "not so much the design that is objected to; the important word is 'palpable.'"[88] In fact, Keats believes that poetry always has some kind of design upon us. After all, the poet often tries to communicate his visions or intuitions or even ideas to the reader whenever he writes poems. Thus, in Keats's view, all great poems derive their profundity from "designs" in which poets unobtrusively communicate their intimate knowledge of the world and human life, gained in the chamber of Mature-Thought, to the reader: "Poetry must be great and unobtrusive, a thing which enters one's soul, and does not startle it or amaze it with itself, but with its subject."[89] Wordsworth's inability, at times, to make his poetry great through unobtrusive communication of profound ideas makes him, according to Keats, an Egoist and makes his methods those of sublimating the ego or of lending divine authority to his personal opinions.

Keats considers the Wordsworthian egotistical sublimity to be one of the major faults of poets of his own generation, while he considers the Elizabethans to be free from this shortcoming:

> Modern poets differ from the Elizabethans in this. Each of the moderns like an Elector of Hanover governs his petty state, and knows how many straws are swept daily from the Causeways in all his dominions and has a continual itching that all the Housewives should have their coppers well scored: the ancients were Emperors of vast provinces, they had only heard of the remote ones and scarcely cared to visit them.[90]

For Keats, his contemporaries do not let their subjects be. They seem to be continually in control of what their subjects ought to be and what they really are by colouring and shaping them according to their personal prejudices. He advocates letting the subjects tell their own stories and reveal themselves for what they are worth, so that the reader can participate in their essential being:

> Why should we be of the tribe of Manasseh, when we can wander with Esau? why should we kick against the Pricks, when we can walk on Roses? Why should we be owls when we can be Eagles? Why be teased with "nice Eyed wagtails," when we have in sight "the Cherub Contemplation?" Why with Wordsworth's "Mathew with a bow of wildling in his hand," when we can have Jacques "under the oak and c.?"[91]

Keats advocates a comprehensive or an exhaustive exploration of the subject through the poetical character's capability for concentrating on the subject's peculiar qualities.

Keats graphically illustrates Wordsworth's occasional but characteristic inability to rise above parochialism: "Old Mathew spoke to him some years ago on some nothing, and because he happens in an Evening Walk to imagine the figure of the Old man, he must stamp it down in black and white, and it is henceforth sacred."[92] Keats does not object to the character of Mathew in this comment on Wordsworth's "The Two April Mornings." Rather, he resents the significance of the meeting between the old man and Wordsworth--a significance which is essentially a projection of Wordsworth's ideas in the poem. Keats is somewhat dissatisfied with Wordsworth for not concentrating his efforts on giving the exact nature of the meeting in order to let the incident speak for itself and allow the reader to draw conclusions about it that he sees as evident. For him, Wordsworth's individuality is not effaced from the experience; hence, what survives is a poorly realized incident and Wordsworth's biased ideas on it. For Keats, Wordsworth--as a typical "modern" poet--sometimes exhibits the strengths, and at other times betrays the weaknesses of, "modernity" or Romanticism: "I don't mean to deny Wordsworth's grandeur and Hunt's merit, but I mean to say that we need not be teased with grandeur and merit when we can have them uncontaminated and unobtrusive."[93]

Keats insists upon the poetical character's ability to create great poetry through its dramatic capability which entails most of the attributes that have been identified in the course of this discussion, namely; sincerity of passionate participation in an experience, comprehensiveness of conception, concentration or life of gusto, annihilation of individuality but not self-consciousness, and ethical sublimity. The manner in which all these attributes help to shape Keats's poems and critical consciousness will become obvious in subsequent chapters.

To conclude this chapter, it is necessary to note briefly that in spite of the similarities in Hazlitt's and Keats's conceptions of the nature of the poetical character,[94] the origin of Keats's ideas can be largely traced to his characteristic response and approach to experience, be it of life or of art. It is a characteristic impersonality which Caldwell rightly sees as the "native virtue of Keats's mind."[95] Other than the numerous examples of Keats's own statements cited in the course of explaining the qualities of the poetical character, there are many testimonies of Keats's contemporaries that demonstrate conclusively that he had most of the qualities he attributes to the poetical character. For instance, Haydon reports that "The humming of the bee, the sight of a flower, the glitter of the sun, seemed to make his nature tremble;

then his eyes flashed, his cheeks glowed, his mouth quivered."[96] Clarke also mentions Keats's reaction to the Spenserian image of "sea-shouldering whales": "He hoisted himself up, and looked burly and dominant and said 'what an image that is!'"[97] These typical responses to experiences demonstrate the affinity of Keats's nature to that of the poetical character.

The significance of Keats's response to the image of "sea-shoudering whales" lies, according to Fairchild, in the fact that Keats is "being made to feel like a whale by words about whales."[98] In this reaction to the image, we discern the various qualities of the poetical character: it ability to live in gusto, its dramatic identification with the subject, its self-consciousness, its sincerity of passion, and its concentration on the subject which rises above narrow ethical considerations. As Bate correctly observes, "there was in Keats an instinctive and almost nostalgic craving for absorption or even self-annihilation in what for him was poetical and which was in all occasions the specifically concrete . . . a desire, indeed, from which his conception of the poetical character was largely rationalized."[99]

CHAPTER III

THE POETIC IMAGINATION

1

Keats conceives of the poetic imagination as the faculty which enables the poetical character to suspend its rigid instinctive and egotistical identity, take on the life or existence of its subject, explore it thoroughly, and capture its distinctive characteristics in art or poetry. And since Keats believes that all great poems are aesthetic records of poets' intimate experiences of life in this complex world, the poetic imagination--insofar as it aids poets in their objective explorations and depictions of human experiences that enrich man's life, and insofar as it broadens poets' knowledge of the world and human life--is the "Genius of Poetry."[1] Hence, for Keats, the poetic imagination is the "ideal" manifestation of the human imagination.

Essentially, Keats, aware of the diverse and sometimes contradictory activities of the imagination, views the poetic imagination as a special form of the human imagination. His conception of the nature and function of the human imagination is obvious in his scheme for the education of poets--a scheme which is latent in his consideration of the world as a vale of Soul-making and in his speculations on the chambers of human mind.[2] For him, the imagination is an integral part of the principle of consciousness awakened in the chamber of Maiden-Thought. But the imagination is neither exclusively lodged in the Heart nor in the Head--the two "grand materials" of the Intelligence in Keats's cosmos of Spirit-creation.[3] He maintains that each of the two grand materials awakens a particular kind of consciousness; the heart awakens man's instinctual awareness while the head generates his intellectual consciousness. Since the imagination does not bring about a specific type of awareness, it is regarded as an intermediary faculty which mediates between the heart and the head by acting upon the data supplied individually or jointly by both of them. The imagination's relation to the heart (sensation) and to the head (intellection) varies according to its aim and the prevailing conditions under which it operates in any given moment. Generally, it is able to increase or decrease the role or importance of either the heart or head, or even bring both faculties into cooperative relation in apprehending or representing reality. However, in its ideal manifestation or what Keats strictly regards as the activity of the poetic imagination, it is a power which, in the words of Coleridge, enables the poet to bring "the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity."[4]

The special nature of the function of the poetic imagination in the cognition, depiction, and creation of the world's reality is evident in Keats's speculations on the imagination's relation to the heart and mind. He maintains that the imagination, in its function as poetic genius, creates an ideal harmony between the heart and the head--a harmony which accounts for the poet's mature and realistic apprehension and portrayal of the nature of man's life in the world. The concord between the faculties, fashioned by the poetic imagination, obliterates all antipodal representations of the activities of the heart and the mind. On the other hand, Keats maintains that the human imagination sometimes functions "unpoetically," resulting in discordant relations between the faculties. He contends that while the poetic manifestation of the imagination realistically apprehends and effectively depicts man and his world, the "unpoetic" manifestation of the imagination unrealistically apprehends and ineffectively portrays the nature of man and his world.

Keats's distinction between the poetic and the unpoetic functions of the imagination informs his explorations of the nature and function of the imagination all through his poetic career. Therefore, any serious student of Keats must be wary of critical opinions that directly or indirectly suggest that Keats attributes some unpoetic qualities to his early conception of the poetic genius. Since Keats conceives of the poetic imagination as free from such limitations as are evident in the "unpoetic imagination," Pereira's suggestion that "Keats was not only concerned with exploring the potential of the poetical imagination, but also the need to come to terms with its limitations,"[5] simply ignores Keats's separation of the poetic from the unpoetic forms of the imagination. Similarly, in his discussion of the pains and pleasures of the poetic imagination, Caldwell seems unaware of the basic distinctions Keats makes in the forms of the imagination.[6] For Keats, the poetic imagination is the ideal form of the imagination and therefore it is free from any limitations that may be found in other forms of the faculty. Like most Romantics, Keats believes that the poetic imagination is the supreme source of all truths about life, and yet, unlike most Romantics, he also identifies and illustrates unpoetic manifestations of the imagination as a means of highlighting the achievements of the poetic genius.

The need for all serious students of Keats to be awake to Keats's distinction between the poetic and the unpoetic forms of the imagination cannot be over-emphasized because many critics, probably due to their ignorance of this distinction, attribute some limitations to the poet's early notion of the poetic imagination. For instance, Stillinger, like many other critics, contends that Keats, in his early works, conceived of the poetic imagination as a faculty which facilitates the poet's escape from the stark realities of life by creating dream-worlds of perpetual pleasures.[7] He asserts that "Keats came to learn that the visionary imagination was a false lure . . . and in the end, he traded it for the naturalized imagination."[8] Gerard also claims that Keats's initial view of the poetic imagination which resulted in "poetry of summer luxury and facile escapism"[9] was later replaced by "a clear sighted imagination."[10] James also argues that Keats's idea of the poetic imagination changed from "the luxurious sensuous imagination" of the early works to the "contemplative imagination" of the later works.[11]

The supposed change in Keats's conception of the nature of the poetic genius is, in spite of what most critics believe, more apparent than real. His view of the poetic imagination, even in the early works, does not admit of any form of escapism or sybariticism for its own sake. Those critics who attribute escapism to the poet's early conception of the poetic genius are, as has been stated earlier, apparently ignorant of the fact that Keats regards the poetic imagination as the ideal form of the human imagination. Furthermore, the critics sometimes erroneously equate the poetical character's "relish of the bright side of things"[12] (a relish which is more obvious in the early poems) with Keats's personal desire to escape from the agonies of existence; evidently they confuse the poetical character's partial views with Keats's convictions or ideas. Moreover, they rather uncritically equate "visionary" with "escapist" because they do not realize that in the Keatsian cosmos, "visionary" more often signifies that which is brought into existence by the imagination rather than that which is a substitute for the real. The "visionary imagination"--insofar as it is the source of great romances and myths that symbolically reflect human life and the reality of the world--is, for Keats, an integral part of the poetic genius. Therefore, visions or some kinds of dream are considered by Keats to be products of the poetic imagination both in the early and later works.

Since the poetic genius is the ideal manifestation of the human imagination, Keats sees it as only potentially present in all human beings. He therefore suggests that anyone who wants to actualize this potentiality must undergo special training in the proper use of the imagination. He believes that, given the diverse and often contradictory functions of the human imagination, all those who aspire to be real poets must learn to distinguish between the poetic and the unpoetic activities of the human imagination. The course of self-education in the discrimination between the poetic and unpoetic forms of the imagination is latently integrated with Keats's programme of Spirit-creation.[13] Hence he views the attainment of Soul-state as essentially coterminous with the actualization of the aesthetic potential of the human imagination.

In the programme for the education of poets, the individual's training in the proper use of the imagination for poetic cognition and creation naturally begins in the chamber of Maiden-Thought[14] where the imaginative power is first awakened. The nascent poet must learn to perceive and depict (in the aesthetic fashion) the two effects of this chamber, effects that symbolically represent the dark and bright aspects of man's life and world. A correct imaginative approach to these effects or aspects of life entails a mature partaking of each of the effects or aspects, revealing their peculiar characteristics and the partial truths that they signify. A mature imaginative involvement in each of the effects is a prerequisite for admission to the chamber of Mature-Thought where a discovery of the harmonious relationship between the two effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought signals the actualization of the poetic potential of the human imagination. On the other hand, an improper imaginative approach to the effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought entails a complete surrender to one of the effects and results in the consideration of that single effect as the sole reality of the chamber or life. Such an improper imaginative experience bars the unsuccessful poet from the chamber of Mature-Thought, from a discovery of the harmony of existence, and from the actualization of the poetic potential of his imagination.

In the Keatsian system, the poetic imagination is born in the chamber of Mature-Thought while the unpoetic capabilities of the imagination are manifest in the chamber of Maiden-Thought. Each birth of poetic consciousness in the chamber of Mature-Thought signals the birth of a great poet. Keats contends that, since all poems are expressions of the imagination,[15] they naturally reflect the measure of success which their creators have attained in the process of actualizing the poetic potential of their imaginations. Furthermore, it is necessary to reiterate the poet's conviction that the individual's success or otherwise in bringing the poetic imagination into existence parallels his maturity or otherwise in perceiving and portraying man and his world; and that great aesthetic works issue from the poetic, while unsuccessful works result from the unpoetic manifestations of the human imagination. Finally, only poets who use the imagination for mature cognitive and creative purposes can produce great poems that effectively capture the harmonious unity of all things.

Keats maintains that the harmonious unity in the world is perceived and depicted by the poetic imagination in two distinct but related ways--the creation of poetic dreams or what he calls "empyreal reflections,"[16] and the vitalization of the veridical world or what he regards as "spiritual repetitions of human life."[17] These two activities of the poetic imagination are important in all poetic attempts to capture the complexity of human life and the nature of the world in art. Since the poet's dream-world is related to, but not confused with the actual one, and since his vitalized reality is related to, but not confused with the actual, both worlds are brought into a kind of unity in which the distinctive features of the vitalized, real, and dream worlds are intensified by the poetic imagination.

Keats's conception of the ultimate achievement of the poetic genius is, in many respects, similar to that of Coleridge. Coleridge believes that a great work of art, as a product of the poetic imagination, is "a union and reconciliation of that which is nature and that which is exclusively human"[18] or "a mediatress between, and reconciler of, nature and man."[19] Keats is aware that all poetic activities, whether they be visions or animations of actual objects, are subjective and therefore separate from nature which is external to man; hence, he believes that only the poetic imagination or what Shelley refers to as "the principle of synthesis"[20] can create a mature union between subjective human activities and the external world. For him, the result of the poetic genius's efforts at reconciling and creating a union between opposites[21] is usually felt in its uniting man's faculties before it is manifest in the "uniting of that which is nature and that which is exclusively human." Thus, the poetic imagination creates a harmonious union between man's heart and mind (faculties identified by Keats in his scheme of Spirit-creation), then effects a concordant union between man and nature, and finally depicts these "unions" in art or poetry. As has been stated earlier, the poetic imagination conceives and recreates these unions either by means of subjective visions[22] or by means of what de Selincourt terms "concentrations of the imaginative powers on reality."[23]

The visionary mode of the poetic imagination is revealed by Keats in his use of Adam's dream as an analogue of the poetic activity: "The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream [Paradise Lost, VIII, 470-1] he awoke and found it truth."[24] What this comparison of the poetic activity to a dream entails is the fact that the human imagination is the major faculty at work in a dream. Nevertheless, while all dreams are like poetic activities because they are subjective, not all dreams are to Keats necessarily poetic manifestations of the imagination. Keats makes a clear distinction between poetic and unpoetic dreams, insisting that only poetic dreams emanate from the poetic imagination. For him, poetic dreams are visionary creations that symbolically represent the poet's knowledge and experience of the harmonious unity in the world--a knowledge that is acquired by those who have attained Soul-states in the chamber of Mature-Thought. Basically, the fact that a poetic dream is an indirect statement on the real nature of the world distinguishes it from the unpoetic dream which confuses fiction with reality or represents reality in a distorted fashion.

In his works, Keats always makes clear distinctions between poetic and unpoetic dreams. In "To J. H. Reynolds Esq.," he identifies three kinds of dreams that make the distinction obvious. The first and second kinds of dreams are unpoetic because while the first establishes the bright aspects of life as sole reality (17), the second highlights and presents the dark aspects of life as the entire truth about existence (70-1). The third kind of dream is, however, an aesthetic form of vision because it presents the dark and bright sides of life in relation to each other; it is a dream that takes its "colours from the sunset" (68-9). These three kinds of dream closely parallel the three elements in Keats's simile of life since they represent effects within the chambers of Thought. For instance, the first kind of dream draws upon the bright effect, while the second is based on the dark effect of the chamber of Maiden-Thought. And the third kind of dream is created from the effect of the chamber of Mature-Thought. Therefore, it follows that if each kind of dream is taken in isolation, the first and second kinds of dream will be unpoetic while the third kind will be poetic. Nevertheless, it must be noted that, because the three kinds of dream are worked into a coherent whole in the epistle "To J. H. Reynolds Esq.," they throw light on each other and form a single poetic dream. And yet, in Keats's view, dreams of perpetual brightness (13-25), dreams of eternal heavens created by fanatics ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 1-2), and dreams of "eternal fierce destruction" ("To J. H. Reynolds," 67-88)--as long as they are presented as the only realities of human existence--make their creators "mere dreaming things" ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 168) and not poets. Only dreams informed by the broader perspectives of human existence make their creators poets because in the dreams there is evidence of "a regular stepping of the Imagination towards a truth."[25]

Since Keats regards the poet's dream as a creation of the poetic imagination, it is appropriate to differentiate the poetic dream from all other dreams by calling it a "vision." Keats himself would have accepted this differentiation in terminology because, apart from the fact that Woodhouse recalls the poet's preference for making "A Vision" instead of "A Dream" the subtitle of "The Fall of Hyperion,"[26] Keats also makes a clear distinction between the poet and the mere dreamer in "The Fall of Hyperion":

> "The poet and the dreamer are distinct,

> "Diverse, sheer opposite, antipodes.
> "The one pours out a balm upon the World,
> "The other vexes it." (I, 199-202)

For Keats, the true poet "pours out a balm upon the World," not necessarily by spinning out "fanciful lands of dreams"[27] like the heavens created by fanatics, but by creating visions that are informed by the universal truths revealed to the poet in the chamber of Mature-Thought.

The poetic visions reflect the world's harmony either by presenting the relations between various aspects of the world or by concentrating on a single aspect of reality, exploring it thoroughly, and revealing its place in the larger scheme of things. Viewed against the background of Spirit-creation, the poetic imagination's visions effectively capture the mellowed brightness or twilight of the chamber of Mature-Thought either by portraying the concord between the bright and dark effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought or by concentrating on either of the effects, exploring it intensely, and demonstrating its relation to other things through an awareness of the larger context of life. There is nothing in the Keatsian system that prohibits the poetic imagination from basing its visions on only the dark or bright side of things, more so because, whenever the poetic genius concentrates on one aspect of reality, it is always able to understand and portray it as a partial, not an absolute reality. The poetic imagination's ability to concentrate on a segment of truth, explore it intimately, and stretch it to its limits without substituting it for the entire truth or confusing it with other segments of truth is what Keats calls "Negative Capability."[28]

In Keats's works, many pleasant visions contain elements that reveal the contexts in which they take place, thereby demonstrating the truth of the specific vision within the broader context of human life. Similarly, larger perspectives are indicated in unpleasant or frightening visons. Two of the many visions that constitute "I Stood Tip-toe" can be drawn upon as useful illustrations of poetic visions based on the bright and dark sides of life. The vision of the consummation of the love between Cupid and Psyche (143-150) symbolizes the bright side of existence while the anguish attendant upon the unreciprocated love of Pan for Syrinx represents the dark side of life. On the surface, these visions appear to be mere figments of "a luxurious imagination" on the one hand, and creations of "a sickly imagination" on the other hand. However, on a deeper level, these subjective creations of the imagination exist in a larger context. The poet's entry into the mythical world is as a result of his deliberate flight into "the realms of wonderment" (142). His flight on "luxurious wings" (131) leads to the discovery of the bower of fulfilment for Psyche and Cupid, while his flight on "sober wings" (127) reveals the sufferings of Pan and

Syrinx. The sets of lovers symbolically enact the two apparently opposing aspects of human love. And yet, in the intense feelings accompanying both visions, the opposition between the two aspects of love seems to disappear. The joys of love symbolized by the fulfilment of the love of Cupid for Psyche are qualified by the attendant tremor and ravishment (147) while the anguish of Pan and Syrinx is made "sublime" by being described as "balmy pain" (153). The interpenetration of pain and pleasure is present in both visions, thus demonstrating how a single aspect of reality can be portrayed in a mature manner by the poetic imagination.

Keats graphically illustrates how a poetic vision based on the bright side of things is generated when he compares the activity of the poetic imagination to that of a spider spinning a beautiful web from its inside: "almost any Man may like the spider spin from his own inwards his own airy Citadel--the points of leaves and twigs on which the spider begins her work are few, and she fills the air with a beautiful circuiting."[29] On the surface this statement seems to suggest that the poet usually spins his works out of his inner self, apparently oblivious of the external world. However, a careful examination of the statement yields a deeper level of meaning in which the poet's works are seen as having some direct contact with the external world of objective reality. Keats's central point is that the existence and truth of the spider's web, in spite of the fact that the web is spun out of the spider's entrails, are greatly dependent on the leaves and twigs that support the web. Similarly, works and visions spun out of the subjective existence of the poet derive their truth or reality from their relation to the objective world. For instance, the myths of Psyche and Cupid, and of Pan and Syrinx in "I Stood Tip-toe," are visionary products of the poetic imagination whose truth, as has been indicated earlier, springs from their symbolic relevance to human life. Therefore, Keats is right in insisting that poetic visions are not substitutes for the real world but creations that enhance the significance of the veridical world by their peculiar relation to it. Furthermore, he is right in insisting that the substitution of dreams for reality, or dreams for visions, cannot be regarded as the function of the poetic imagination.

2

While visions constitute "the empyreal reflections"[30] of the poetic imagination, the enhancing of qualities of actual objects through a process of intensification or what Keats sees as the "spiritual repetition of the actual,"[31] constitutes the poetic imagination's enriching of, and creation from, the actual and veridical reality. The enriching of objects and experiences can, in part, be done by the poetic genius through the vitalization of past events or through a personally real recreation of historical happenings; hence, for Keats, individuals who have successfully actualized the aesthetic potentiality of their imagination can intimately participate in the activities of generations other than their own. He avers, "as my imagination strengthens, I do not live in this world alone but in a thousand different worlds."[32] His reference to the strengthening of the imagination indicates that he believes that he has learned to use his imagination for aesthetic purposes. His ability to live in a thousand different worlds is part of the reward for a proper use of his imagination while the thousand different worlds that he is capable of living in can either be visionary like those discussed earlier or they can be historically true worlds. Thus, the two distinct manifestations of the poetic imagination--visionary creation, and animation of the real--are shown to be related and not mutually exclusive.

Keats demonstrates the poetic imagination's ability to vitalize historically true worlds by describing his intimate participation in the customs and traditions of previous Ages:

> We with our bodily eyes see but the fashions and Manners of one country for one age--and then die. Now to me manners and customs since passed whether among the Babylonians or the Bactrians are as real, or even more real than those among which I live.[33]

What makes customs of previous generations real to Keats is not so much their historical verity or the mere fact of their being recalled by him but the fact that he recreates and lives "personally" in the past generations, partaking of the essences of their traditions and customs. In recalling and recreating the previous customs, the poetic imagination highlights and intensifies some elements of the customs, making them richer than, and even different from, their historical originals.

Keats believes that the poetic imagination often modifies what it recalls. This power of the imagination is attributed by Immanuel Kant to the "reproductive imagination" which he distinguishes from the visionary power or "productive imagination."[34] Keats illustrates the modifying ability of the aesthetic imagination when he discusses the possible modifications in an individual's recall of a singer's face:

> Have you never by being Surprised with an old Melody--in a delicious place--by a delicious voice, felt over again the very Speculations and Surmises at the time it first operated on your Soul--do you not remember forming to yourself the singer's face more beautiful than it was possible, and yet with the elevation of the Moment you did not think so--even then you were mounted on the Wings of the Imagination so high.[35]

"Forming to [oneself] the singer's face more beautiful than it was possible" suggests the imagination's power to intensify an aspect of the reality being reproduced. Coleridge calls this imaginative ability the "modifying or coadunating power" while Wordsworth refers to it as the "endowing or modifying power."[36]

The imagination's capability for making a recalled face more beautiful than the original face perceived, raises the question of the authenticity of the recreated face or the issue of the relationship between the modified reality and the unmodified or real one. In a sense, Keats implicitly answers this query in his discussion of the manner in which the singer's face is recalled. For instance, he considers the intensification of the beauty of the singer's face to be a genuine activity of the aesthetic imagination because the imaginative act is accomplished within the framework of a broad view of life. The beauty of the singer's face is not regarded as the sole reality but as a natural corollary of a number of other circumstances. Latent comparisons of the enhanced with the unenhanced beauty of the singer, of the poet's latter with his former feelings, of the circumstances prevailing at the time of perception with those at the time of recreation, and of his former with his present speculations, all combine to create a larger context in which the act of modification takes place. An unpoetic recall of the face will disregard the larger context of the event, confuse the modified with the unmodified reality, and substitute the momentarily intensified beauty of the singer's face for the real one.

Keats maintains that the imagination is also capable of intensifying the dark side of things. He once stated that since most of his privations were creations or "troubles of the imagination,"[37] they were stretched to such a level that they had become more serious than they were in actual life. He also did advise his sister against "employing [her] imagination on the distress and evils which are in wait for every one."[38] He does not disapprove of the application of the imagination to the dark effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought or the evils of the world. In fact, he insists upon the need to intensify the dark side of existence as a means of gaining a valuable knowledge of the possibilities of this aspect of life. But, he considers any intensification of the seamy side of life which does not take into account the unseamy side as unpoetic. Hence, in "To J. H. Reynolds, Esq.," he admits that his portrayal of the "eternal fierce destruction in nature" (97-104) is a gross exaggeration of reality--an exaggeration which is precipitated by the "sickly imagination."[39] His mature understanding of the contexual value of elements or circumstances of actual life that the imagination intensifies is a tribute to the knowledge he has acquired in the chamber of Mature-Thought--a knowledge which naturally regulates the human imagination in its approach to reality and visions. His advice to Bailey about making provision for the imagination--"you must allow for imagination"[40]--in all searches for truth springs from a mature understanding of the nature of imaginative experiences.

The imagination, for Keats, does not only modify recalled events, it also modifies concrete objects or even creates entirely "new" ones from them. Writing to Haydon, he avows, "I look upon the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Earth and its contents as materials to form greater things."[41] For him, the poetic imagination draws upon objective reality or natural phenomena in creating things that are subjective but real. It either highlights aspects of its subjects as is the case in the recall of the singer's face, or uses objective things as starting points in creativity as is the case in the spider's web analogue. Natural objects can be bases for the vitalization of the actual and for the creation of visions.

The imagination's visionary and naturalized activities[42] are also evident in Keats's classification of the subjects upon which the poetic imagination operates. He classifies poetic subjects or "Ethereal things under three heads--Things real--things semireal and nothings. Things real such as existences of the sun, Moon & Stars and passages of Shakespeare. Things semireal such as love, the clouds & c. . . . and Nothings."[43] His examples of real things are interesting in the sense that natural phenomena like the sun and the moon are regarded as having the same measure of reality as passages of Shakespeare. For Keats, the passages of Shakespeare represent all great works of art; hence all great works of art, like the sun and moon, continue to reflect some valuable part of man's knowledge of his life and world. Though subjective, the works continue to exert as much influence on man as objective things like the moon and stars.[44] "Things semireal" do not exist independent of the human consciousness. They derive existence from the interaction of man with the world. Things that are "nothings" (like dreams and visions) exist in the consciousness of man, virtually independent of the external world. Distinctive as things in these three categories are, the poetic imagination is capable of conceiving, comprehending, intensifying, and depicting things that fall within the categories. And since the things within these categories represent virtually all things in the world, it follows that the imagination can perceive and portray all things.

All Keats's poems can be rewardingly viewed as products of the poetic imagination's operation on materials classed "under these three heads." In fact, all the poems draw upon materials from the three categories. For instance, in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the urn, as a great work of art that is comparable to passages of Shakespeare, can be said to be a real thing; the lovers depicted in the second stanza may be viewed as semireal because their existence is guaranteed partly by the external world and partly by the subjective world of the individual; and the imaginary melodies from the "soft pipes, that/Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone" (II, 2-3) are "nothings" because they are fanciful, deriving their reality solely from the subjective world of the poet. Similarly, in Endymion, the protagonist's love for the Moon goddess is a thing that is semireal; his fascination with the Moon and the other natural creatures is a fascination with real things; and his dream in which he beholds Cynthia--like his imaginative voyages into the sea, earth and sky--is a "nothing." In various ways, Keats utilizes materials that exist either in the objective or subjective worlds of man as bases for imaginative creativity. However, in spite of the apparent differences between the materials in the three groups, there is a close bond between them established by the synthesizing or uniting attribute of the poetic genius.

The poetic activities of creating visions from the subjective and objective worlds, and of vitalizing materials in both worlds are essentially subjective. Hence, Keats establishes an "objective or external basis" for demonstrating the truth of aesthetic experiences. The "external standard" of the truth of an aesthetic vision or experience is, as has been stated earlier, its effective reflection of the reality of man's existence in this world. In like manner, the truth of a vitalized object depends on how it "poetically" reflects the original or normal object. Since this standard of reality is somewhat external to the poet who perceives, represents, and creates by means of the imagination, Keats offers another basis for determining the reality of the subjective act of artistic cognition and creation. This second standard, which complements the effective reflection of reality by visions and modified experiences, is that of the intensity of sensations that accompanies an aesthetic experience.

Regarding every poetic activity as basically a subjective mental pursuit, Keats speculates, "probably every mental pursuit takes its reality from the ardour of the pursuer--being in itself a nothing--Ethereal things may at least thus be real."[45] "Things real, things semireal and nothings," because they must be perceived in order that they may exist personally for the artist,[46] derive part of their reality from the ardour of the pursuer. While this kind of reality bestowed on various subjects by the human act of perceiving is relevant to the authenticity of all "ethereal things," it is of greater relevance to "things semireal" and of much greater importance to "nothings": "Things such as love, the Clouds and c. . . . require a greeting of the Spirit to make them wholly exist and Nothings . . . are made Great and dignified by an ardent pursuit."[47] It is plausible to argue that within the Keatsian cosmos, all aesthetic creations--be they visions or intensified actualities--are essentially products of the imaginative consciousness and can thus be regarded as "nothings." Hence, from the fact that all artistic creations are nothings, it follows that they "are made great and dignified by an ardent pursuit" or at least they "require a greeting of the spirit to make them wholly exist." Keats himself would have accepted this as a valid argument because of his belief that the genuiness of poetic activities is often guuaranteed by intense passions: "What the imagination siezes as Beauty must be truth . . . for all our passions as of love . . . . are all in their sublime, creative of essential Beauty."[48] For him, sublime passions are mainly intense feelings, while "essential Beauty" is the aesthetic ideal of a mature and intimate knowledge of the nature of life and the world, revealed to Souls in the chamber of Mature-Thought.[49] Intense passions, in his view, elevate the soul of man to heights where he can personally partake of the wisdom of existence by embracing the essential beauty in all things. Hence, he can justifiably assert that "a state of excitement" or passionate intensity "is the only state for the best of Poetry."[50]

All great poets are, in Keats's view, "simple imaginative Minds" whose lives are based on "Sensations rather than thought."[51] In his speculations on Soul-making, Keats maintains that sensations deeply affect, and impress themselves on the human heart. And as the basis of man's intimate experiencing of reality, sensations are of prime importance in all attempts aimed at effective aesthetic cognition and creativity. They constitute the true means to the acquisition of poetic wisdom through the intimate experiencing of the essential beauty in all things. Since Keats holds the view that "axioms in philosophy are no axioms until they are proved on the pulses,"[52] it follows that the human heart is the repository of intimate philosophical truths and not just a seat of sheer sentimentality. Therefore, just as poetry is the "true voice of feeling,"[53] so also is the heart the touchstone of poetic effectiveness.

Keats's belief in the relevance of intense feelings to the real value of poetry is thus not a mere advocacy of sentimental luxuries in poetry. He contrasts the simple imaginative mind (the essential poetic mind) whose life is based on sensations rather than intellection with "the complex mind--one that is imaginative and at the same time careful of its fruits--to whom it is necessary that years should bring the philosophic mind."[54] Although he recognizes the achievements of a complex mind, Keats reaffirms his unshakable faith in the profundity and truth of the poetic activities of a simple imaginative mind whose works are products of intense passions. He therefore questions the validity of the Wordsworthian belief that "years should bring the philosophical mind" to the complex mind by maintaining that a life of sensation subsumes philosophical understanding. For Keats, as Trilling correctly observes, "sensations generate ideas and remain continuous with them."[55] Hence, poetic wisdom is integral with sensations rather than with intellection in the Keatsian poetics.

In order to emphasize the necessity of intense feelings to the truth of poetic experiences, Keats also compares human dreams with those of gods. He maintains, "Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly pass/Their pleasures in a long immortal dream" (Lamia, I, 127-8). On the other hand, the reality of dreams by mortals depends on the intensity of feelings accompanying them. For instance, Hermes, as a god, can easily procure the mystical powers with which he converts his dreams into reality (Lamia, I, 120-6). And Lamia, as long as she retains her god-like identity, can also convert her dreams into reality, but as soon as she is transformed into a human creature, she takes on some human weaknesses that must compel her to pursue her dreams passionately before they can become real. Similarly, Endymion, being a human prince, must passionately pursue his dream before he can understand and realize its significance; hence, Endymion is partly a symbolic representation of the human quest for the reality of imaginative dreams. All human beings who pursue their dreams pasionately are like Endymion ultimately able to discover the significance of the "ideals" that are "a cheering light/Unto our Souls, and bound to us so fast/That, whether there be shine or gloom o'ercast/They must be with us or we die" (Endymion, I, 25; 30-33). Thus, the poetic ideal that is discovered by the fervent pursuit of visions is analogous to the true knowledge acquired by Souls in the chamber of Mature-Thought--an ideal or profound knowledge which Keats regards as the reward of all those who have simple and imaginative minds and live by sensations rather than thought. "The simple imaginative Mind may have its reward in the repetition of its own silent workings coming continually on the Spirit with a fine Suddenness,"[56] he declares.

Keats's heavy reliance on the intensity of sensations as a means of determining the truth of imaginative experiences and of discovering the essential beauty in all things is partly reminiscent of William Duff's consideration of the imagination as "the faculty whereby the mind not only reflects upon its own operations but which assembles the various ideas conveyed to the understanding by the canal of the senses."[57] These senses form the canal for the transportation of ideas to the understanding which perceives the real truth of human life. "The understanding" is different from mere intellection or what Kant calls the activity of the mind unregulated by the imagination,[58] because Keats insists that "Memory should not be called knowledge."[59] Only an idea that has been tested on the pulses constitutes the true Keatsian knowledge. And the poet gains this aesthetic wisdom because he is a man of intense sensibilities or, in the words of Coleridge, he is a man who "carries the simplicity of childhood into the powers of manhood."[60]

Keats recognizes the fact that intense sensations alone cannot guarantee the authenticity of imaginative creations. Hence, while he maintains that the poetic flight should be propelled by the passions, he also insists upon the necessity of extensive knowledge: "An extensive knowledge is needful to thinking people--it takes away the heat and the fever; and helps by widening speculation to ease the Burden of Mystery."[61] Since mystery largely arises from ignorance, any visionary flight undertaken in a state of ignorance arising from mystery is--no matter how intensely passionate the visionary may be--bound to be unpoetic because it will have no bearing on reality. For example, in spite of his passionate involvement in the world's pleasures that have been assembled in Lamia's palace of love, Lycius is unable to survive the test of reality in the normal world. Lycius's pleasures are intense but unregulated by knowledge and therefore they are deficient. Keats asks, "Or is it that imagination brought/Beyond its proper bound . . . /Lost in a sort of Purgatory blind/ Cannot refer to any standard law of earth or heaven?" ("To

J. H. Reynolds," 78-82). Lycius's fate is an obvious answer to Keats's question. Since he is unable to refer to any standard law of earth or heaven, Lycius has a very limited knowledge of life and cannot be expected to speculate on it, making his death inevitable despite his intense feelings. In fact, his intense passions hustle him faster to death and oblivion than would otherwise be the case.

Keats graphically illustrates the great dangers (short of death) involved in an intensely passionate imaginative activity that is unguided by knowledge in the following:

> The difference of high sensation with and without knowledge appears to me this: in the latter case we are falling continually ten thousand feet deep and being blown up again without wings and with all the horrors of a bare shouldered creature--in the former case, our shoulders are fledged, and we go thro' the same air and space without fear.[62]

Knowledge provides the poet with wings that are necessary in all imaginative flights. It also makes the flights purposeful since it creates a link between the visionary and the normal worlds. Without this knowledge, any visionary flight may become purposeless and turn into "An awful mission" because "when the soul is fled/To high above our head/Affrighted do we gaze/After its airy maze" ("God of the Meridian," 5; 9-12). Thus, Keats asks whether the fear involved in this kind of uncontrolled flight "is not the cause of madness?" ("God of the Meridian," 16-17).

An imaginative flight accompanied by intense sensations but unregulated by extensive knowledge is what Keats sometimes calls fancy. He maintains that, in writing Endymion--a long poem, "Fancy is the Sails and Imagination is the Rudder."[63] The aesthetic genius as the ideal manifestation of the human imagination subsumes the relevant knowledge which serves as the control centre in any artistic flight. Therefore, when Keats agrees with those critics who say that "we must temper the imagination with judgement,"[64] he implies that the unpoetic manifestation of the human imagination which may be regarded as fancy must be tempered by judgement. And yet, in the poem titled "Fancy," he seems to equate fancy with the poetic imagination because the power of fancy celebrated in the poem (that of spreading a film of familiarity over strange things and spreading a film of strangeness over familiar things) is analogous to the modifying power of the imagination which is evident in the poetic creation of visions and in the vitalization of actualities.

Keats's concept of fancy is thus closer to that of Wordsworth than that of Coleridge. In a sense, his view of fancy agrees with Wordsworth's, and is opposed to Coleridge's definition of fancy as "the aggregative or associative power" as distinguished from the imagination which is the "shaping and modifying power."[65] He implicitly endorses Wordsworth's assertion that the imagination is not only a "shaping and modifying power" but also an associative and aggregative power.[66] However, Keats disagrees with Wordsworth and Coleridge in their belief that fancy operates on "fixities and definites" while the imagination operates on "the plastic, the pliant and the indefinite."[67] In fact, Keats feels that the poetic imagination is capable of converting "definites and fixities" into "plastic, pliant and indefinite materials."

3

Keats has a consistent hypothesis about how the aesthetic imagination transforms or modifies its subjects in the process of cognition and creation of visions or of vitalized actualities. Generally, he believes that when external objects make impressions on the human mind, the new impressions come in contact with previous ones and a process of association of various impressions and ideas takes place. Keats's notion is in consonance with John Locke's empiricism in which it is postulated that man can build the most complex ideas from sensations and the mind's reflections on the sensations.[68] John Locke sees the interaction between sensations and intellection as inevitable but he does not clearly postulate an intermediary faculty like the imagination--as Keats, many Romantic poets, and transcendentally oriented philosophers like Kant do--in order to actuate the interaction between the heart and the mind. Moreover, while David Hartley's associationist theory (developed out of Locke's hints on the subject) regards "similarity" and "temporal propinquity"[69] as the basis for an associative recall of ideas, Keats (though not directly concerned with abstract ideas) believes that the human passions or feelings form the basis for most associations. Keats would accept Hartley's consideration of similarity and temporal propinquity as the true indexes for the association of ideas if, and only if, they are informed by sensations or if the sensations that are implied in Hartley's physiologically determined theory of associationism become explicit.[70] In other words, Keats considers intense passions to be the main criterion of associationism in what to Fogle is the "imaginative process which begins with the physiological and culminates in the psychological."[71] Hence, in speaking about the recall of "an old Melody . . . . leading one to feel again one's very Speculations and Surmises," Keats is really describing an imaginative experience involving an amalgam of ideas and feelings. In the recall of the singer's face, other impressions made by the song's melody, the spot where the singer's voice was first heard, the individual's ideas, and the face itself are all united by the complex coalescence of past and present impressions in the creation of a new image.

It is fairly easy to disentangle the numerous threads woven together by the passions in the creation of many of the complex textures that constitute Keats's poems. For instance, in the relatively simple sonnet titled "How many Bards Gild the Lapse of Time," the poet's brooding over the sublime and earthly beauties of "bards that gild the lapse of time" initiates a chain of imaginative associations.[72] Brooding over beauties produced by the "few bards" out of the many, "that gild the lapse of time" (1-3) whom he has "made the food/Of [his] delighted fancy" (2-3), the poet creates some similarities between the various images in the poem. First, he relates the poetic beauties to the poets by making the poets themselves beauties also. Secondly, he associates the sense of "golden" and "ardoning" beauties suggested by "gild" with the poets' rhymes; thus, transforming all poetic beauties into some kind of sound or melody. By implicitly regarding the creative act as that of making rhymes or music, the poet establishes the basis for converting the "earthly and sublime beauties" (4) produced by bards into melodies.[73] Thus, poetic beauties are poetically referred to as "rhymes" or melodies that gild the lapse of time. Thirdly, having transformed visual beauties into auditory ones, Keats proceeds to assess the impressions made upon him by sounds or melodies flowing from different poets. As soon as the poet expresses his belief that whenever he sits "down to rhyme" (5) the beauties "will before [his] mind intrude"

(4, 6), he realizes that "intrude" implies some form of dissonance in the impressions he receives. Hence, he endeavours to raise all the sounds that come to his attention above "sheer confusion" by feeling them intensely. The harmonic sounds from the spheres inhabited by the poets coalesce and become "pleasing chime." Fourthly, the poet imaginatively associates "the pleasing chime" with "the song of birds--the whisp'ring of the leaves--/The voices of the waters--the great bell" (10-11). And fifthly, all the harmonious sounds are conceived of as culminating in "pleasing music" that contrasts with "wild uproar" (14). In this sonnet, therefore, Keats employs the image of harmonious sound, since it excites the passions,[73] to unify the poem, revealing the associative power of the imagination.

Keats recognizes the usefulness of the associative power of the imagination in poetic creativity, a power which Wordsworth explains in terms of the psychology of poetic creation or composition in his 1815 preface to the Lyrical Ballads. Keats sometimes refers to this power of the imagination as the faculty of invention. He suggests that a long poem offers the poet a broad scope for testing the capability of the imagination to invent through the association of ideas or impressions: "Endymion will be a test, a trial of my powers of imagination."[74] "Endymion," he states, "will test chiefly my invention . .

. by which I must make 4000 lines out of one bare circumstance."[75] He believes that, and demonstrates how, the imagination is capable of taking a single incident, exploring it intimately by testing it on the pulses of the poet, "inventing" other possible incidents from those suggested or associated with the initial one, and sincerely capturing all these in art. Therefore, in embarking upon the task of writing Endymion, Keats does not feel that the "one bare circumstance" he has to work with is a handicap. Rather, he views it as a great opportunity for the triumph of his poetic imagination. The Moon goddess' visit to Endymion is to him an event with limitless possibilities. When he declares that "Byron describes what he sees--I describe what I imagine,"[76] he is really talking about how his imagination is able to create new experiences from single incidents like the visit of the Moon goddess to Endymion. He considers his task of imaginatively "inventing" the possibilities suggested by what he sees, recalls or experiences to be more difficult than that of merely describing or reproducing an object or a situation as it is in normal experience.[77] William Duff terms this imaginative power "the plastic power of inventing new association of ideas, and compounding them with infinite variety,"[78] and argues that the effective use of this power is the hallmark of originality.[79]

In the fourth stanza of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," Keats is able to draw upon the plastic power of the imagination in associating various images carved on the urn, and creating from these associations images of his own which he presents in "scenes and objects which never existed in nature":[80]

> Who are these coming to sacrifice,
>   To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
> Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
>   And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
> What little town by river or sea shore,
>   Or mountain built with peaceful citadel,
>   Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
> And, little town, thy streets for evermore
>   Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
>   Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

The first four verses of this stanza ostensibly describe a scene carved on the Grecian urn, a scene of a priest leading a heifer towards a place of sacrifice. On close examination, however, these verses turn out to be a depiction of the poet's reaction to the scene. Attention is focused on the poet's sense of wonder, and his intense feelings, making the scene itself incidental rather than central to the immediate concerns of this first quatrain of the stanza. Through his intense feelings, the poet becomes an active participant in the action captured; thus creating the right atmosphere for him to commence with an imaginative extension of the incident of sacrifice. He first associates the priest with other people and thereby creates a kind of sacrificial procession headed by the priest. Secondly, he relates the procession suggested by "this folk" to an indefinite "little town." Thirdly, the procession out of the town immediately suggests the image of a deserted place which the poet aptly captures. Thus far, the scene conjured up is so real that "the marble nature" of the supposed inhabitants of the little town is all but forgotten. Fourthly, however, with the suggestion of the desolation of the town comes an implicit realization of the fossilized nature of the people of the emptied town. And fifthly, in the final tercet of the stanza, the poet expresses his deep feeling of regret at the apparent absence of a chronicler, possibly one amongst the former inhabitants of the town, who can tell why the town is deserted. Paradoxically, the desolation of the city is depicted by a poet who, though "in reality" has not been part of the procession of sacrifice, has imaginatively become part of the actions captured in the urn by art--actions that are now recreated, intensified, and relived in poetry by the imaginative poet.

In spite of his belief in a fairly systematic pattern of association in the operations of the poetic imagination, Keats recognizes "an unconscious or involuntary element" involved in all poetic activities. He believes that imaginative processes are sometimes so complex that it is virtually impossible to shed light on the numerous and often labyrinthian paths of poetic cognition and creation. To Haydon, he writes,

> Believe me Haydon, your picture is part of myself--I have ever been too sensible of the labyrinthian path to eminence in Art (judging from Poetry) ever to think I understand the emphasis of painting. The innumerable compositions and decompositions which take place between the intellect and its thousand materials before it arrives at that trembling, delicate and snail-horn perception of beauty. I know not your havens of intenseness--nor ever can know them: but for this I hope nought you achieve is lost upon me: for when a Schoolboy the abstract idea I had of a heroic painting was--what I cannot describe.[81]

For Keats, "the innumerable compositions and decompositions which take place between [the imagination] and its thousand materials" make it practically impossible for anyone either to unravel the mystery of aesthetic creativity or to describe all the materials that go into the making of a great work of art.

In a sense, Keats's recognition of the "unconscious" activities of the poetic imagination is responsible for his postulation of some form of inspiration which Finney calls "a variation of the Platonic theory of inspiration"[82] in aesthetic cognition and creation. Keats believes that "strong pressures" from distinctively defined Identities, like Tom in his anguished existence, can exert inescapable influence on the poet's imagination[83] and "compel" him to create. Not all external pressures are, however, as painful as the anguished Identity of Tom. Numerous examples of strong but pleasant external Identities are responsible for the creation of many of Keats's poems. For instance, in "I Stood Tip-toe," the natural beauty of the landscape compels or inspires him to create the visions that constitute the poem. Similarly, Endymion's dream in which he beholds Cynthia is ultimately a product of "the pressure" from the strong Identity of the Moon which spreads its splendour over the landscape. Intense pressures on the poet usually lead to some kind of involuntary imaginative activity, accomplished in a poetic mood that is analogous to the Wordsworthian "wise passiveness."[84] Keats sometimes refers to the mood of the poet during this kind of inspiration as "diligent Indolence" and celebrates it in the "Ode on Indolence" and in "What the Thrush Said."

While Keats's view of inspiration is in consonance with the Platonic postulate of artistic inspiration, it is truly opposed to the Platonic sophistry which equates "inspiration" with "possession" as is evident in the Socratic declaration that "poets are only interpreters of the gods by whom they are severally possessed."[86] When he avers, "I see and sing by my own eyes inspired" ("Ode to Psyche," 43), Keats states the central paradox in his notion of inspiration; he is inspired by the goddess and yet he is inspired by himself. He further clarifies his idea of inspiration in a letter to Haydon when he writes, "I remember that you had notions of a good genius presiding over you. I have of late the same thought, for things which I do half at Random are afterwards confirmed by my judgement in a dozen features of Propriety. Is it too daring to fancy Shakespeare the Presider?"[87] His choice of Shakespeare as "Presider" exemplifies his acknowledgement of the strong impact which the aesthetic world of Shakespeare has on him. What is important to note is that the Shakespearean world has become so much a part of his life that his imagination can "unconsciously" or involuntarily draw upon it in ways that defy rational associationist explanations. Put differently, various Shakespearean ideas and images are unconsciously "composed and decomposed" by the imagination in the complex process of creativity.

Keats symbolically expresses his distinctive concept of inspiration by drawing upon the convention of attributing poetic inspiration to Muses. For instance, in Endymion, when he is overcome by acute sensations that accompany his being "mounted on the Wings of the Imagination so high,"[88] he asks, "Muse of my native land, am I inspir'd?" (IV, 354). Furthermore, when he conceives of the imaginative heights that he confidently attains as unusual and therefore somewhat inspired, he declares, "This is giddy air, and I must/Spread pinions to keep here; nor do I dread/Or height, or depth, or width, or any chance/ Precipitous" (IV, 355-8). These two statements throw some light on Keats's idea of inspiration. Using the "Ode to Apollo" and "Bards of Passion and of Mirth" as bases in the interpretation of these statements, one can say that the muse of his native land is Shakespeare and his confidence in the height of inspiration springs from his easy admittance to the aesthetic world of Apollo where most bards join in song with the god.

Essentially, therefore, the "metaphysical" foundation of Keats's notion of inspiration is his belief that poetry or "essential beauty" is immanent in all fully formed Identities.[89] "For what makes the sage or poet write/ But the fair paradise of Nature's light?" he asks in "I Stood Tip-toe" (125-6). The irresistible pressure from nature's light inspires the poet to write about the beauty of nature. Since he believes that "The poetry of the earth is never dead," it follows that the earth and its numerous contents continuously "emit" poetry which the receptive imagination captures in moments of inspiration. In a state of "diligent Indolence," the poet's soul can become receptive to the poetry that ceaselessly flows "From the clear space of ether, [and] the tender greening/Of April meadow;" and from "A lovely tale of human life" and "the agonies, the strife/Of human hearts" ("Sleep and Poetry," 169-71; 110; 123-4). It is interesting to note that these sources of inspiration are predominantly "real things" or things within the first of Keats's triadal categories of "Ethereal things."[90] Since Keats regards natural phenomena and great works of art as having the same measure of reality by considering them "real things," and since these real things can "wholly exist" without "the greeting of the Spirit,"[91] it follows that what makes them the main source of poetry is the fact of their being well formed Identities that can exert irresistible pressures on the receptive poet.

4

Keats's conception of the poetic faculty--distilled from his perceptive understanding, and subtle balancing of the possibilities and limitations of the human imagination--was present in his mind from the beginning of his poetic and critical career.[92] His poems, therefore, betray his ceaseless efforts to explore in order to confirm, and exemplify his general view of the poetic imagination. While he began testing out his insights into the nature and function of the aesthetic genius in the very first poem he wrote, he strongly believed that--because of its greater length--*Endymion* provided him with a larger scope for testing and demonstrating his understanding of the poetic genius. By making Endymion's search for Cynthia's love start with a dream or vision of the goddess, Keats establishes a good base for making Endymion's pursuit of Cynthia a symbolic representation of "the poet's quest for authentic imaginative experience."[93] Endymion's ardent pursuit of the significance of his dream becomes symbolic of the nascent poet's[94] quest for the poetic capability of the human imagination. Endymion's numerous ordeals leading to the eventual winning of the love of the Indian maiden also represent the numerous tests which the poet must undergo before he can actualize the poetic potential of his imagination. And just as Endymion discovers the many possibilities and limitations of his imagination as he undergoes the various ordeals, so also does the poet learn to distinguish the poetic from the unpoetic manifestations of the human imagination. Thus, in Endymion, various qualities and functions of the imagination are revealed and examined as a means of establishing and depicting the nature and activities of the poetic imagination.

The introductory section of the first book of Endymion celebrates "beauty" that gives man eternal joy. And when the main "action" of the poem begins in this book, this beauty is again venerated by the Latmians through the worship of Pan. Basically, the beauty celebrated in the introductory section and venerated by the Latmians is the same as that which the poet comes to know personally in the chamber of Mature-Thought; hence it is the ultimate prize which Endymion seeks in his quest for the significance of his dream. It is, therefore, ironical that the "hero" should be apathetic to his subjects' worship of Pan. The fact that his lack of interest in the traditional festival of his people is as a result of his vision of Cynthia, a vision in which Cynthia is actually a symbolic embodiment of the beauty being worshipped by the Latmians, further intensifies the irony by highlighting Endymion's unreceptiveness to the "spirit" of the festival. He cannot imaginatively transcend his immediate and egotistical concern in order to partake fully of the essence of the festival of Pan.

By making Endymion unreceptive to the significance of the Pan festival, Keats sets the stage for the protagonist's great quest for "enlightenment." The main issue, in a sense, is that Endymion's ignorance of the importance of the worship of Pan reflects his apparent ignorance of the real meaning of his vision of Cynthia. Another element which makes Endymion's ordeal inevitable is the awakening of a sense of "egotistical" self-consciousness which prevents him from accepting the traditions of his people on trust. Like the aspiring poet, he is poised to seek and experience what the vision means to him personally, and perhaps, in the process of understanding his vision, he may also come to grasp the meaning of the Pan festival. His "wakeful anguish of the soul" ("Ode on Melancholy," I, 10) sets him apart from the other Latmians. His plight is thus like that of the aspiring poet in "The Fall of Hyperion" whose soul is deeply touched by the conditions in the world (I, 147-9). Endymion and the nascent poet are both visionaries who, judged by the standards established in the Keatsian scheme of Spirit-creation, have started to grapple with the problems of consciousness in the chamber of Maiden-Thought. The Latmians and the non-visionaries, on the other hand, seem to be satisfied with the life in the "infant and thoughtless Chamber." Endymion's ordeals which are symbolic of the nascent poet's trials are designed to lead him to a gradual mastery of the effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought and to the eventual discovery of the essential truth about life that is exclusively lodged in the chamber of Mature-Thought. The satisfying of the requirements in the trials will yield to Endymion and the poet the ultimate meaning of their visions by actualizing the poetic potential of their imaginations.

Endymion's dream in which he tastes the "sweet love" of Cynthia ushers him into the bright effect of the chamber of Maiden-Thought while his awakening to the Latmian life comparatively ushers him into the dark effect of the chamber. Though Cynthia's splendour dazzles him and awakens his desire to remain in the brightness of his dream, his self-consciousness makes him wake up from the dream and forces him to compare both experiences. Thus, Cynthia's world, at this point, represents the bright effect, while the Latmian world represents the dark effect of this chamber. All through the first book of _Endymion_, the protagonist erroneously regards the visionary world as mutually exclusive from the Latmian. In other words, the Poet-in-training considers his dream-world to be better than, and separate from, the veridical world. The rest of the poem is devoted to teaching Endymion or the questing poet the correct relationship between the visionary and the actual worlds.

The gross misunderstanding of the relationship between these two aspects of reality notwithstanding, Endymion is vouchsafed other experiences that enable him to awaken gradually to the mutual relatedness of the two worlds because there are certain redeeming elements in his reactions to the dream and the worship of Pan. These redeeming features are discernible in his ability to distinguish between imaginative and actual experiences. In discussing his dream with his sister, Peona, Endymion shows that he is aware of how the prevailing beauty in nature "inspired" his dream. The sky, the lanscape, the breezes, the forests, and the Moon (I, 540-78)--all combine to produce the enchantment that inspired the dream. "Methought I lay/Watching the zenith, where the milky way/ Among the stars in virgin splendour pours"(I, 578-80), he declares. On the other hand, after waking from the dream, he feels great sorrow at the loss of the dream, a sorrow which he allows to darken whatever he beholds (I, 691-706). His awareness of the effect of his mood on nature shows that he does not confuse the modification wrought on nature by his negative mood with the actual condition in nature.

The fact that Endymion does not confuse his dreams with reality demonstrates his recognition of the vision of Cynthia and the distorted picture of nature as partly created by his imagination. Yet he insists on the truth of his visions and stoutly attempts to refute Peona's commonsensical argument about "how light/Dreams must themselves be; seeing they're more slight/Than the mere nothings that engender them!" (I, 754-6). His intense feeling of pleasure in his visionary relationship with Cynthia and his subsequent anguish at the loss of the vision convince him that the dream signifies something more than what is immediately obvious to him. He relies on his intense feelings as the means for authenticating the dream and envisaging its deeper import.

For Keats, Endymion--insofar as he is able to counter Peona's argument about the fanciful nature of imaginative or poetic experiences by asserting the authenticating function of intense feelings in all visionary activities--is on the right path to "redemption from a barren dream."[95] Endymion's belief that his sublime passions are able to lead him to the discovery and attainment of his ultimate goal makes him "a simple imaginative mind [whose life is based] on sensations rather than thought."[96] His life is, therefore, comparable to that of Adam in the sense that they are both, in Keats's view, simple imaginative minds whose dreams are partly created by themselves. Their dreams, as Ford points out, are products of their "prefigurative imaginations";[97] hence, while Adam's dream foreshadows his union with Eve, that of Endymion points towards his eventual union with the Indian maiden. Yet, because Endymion does not have "special grace" from God, he cannot embrace the ultimate reality of his dream as easily as Adam does.[98] He must, like all other mortals, passionately pursue the hint he gets from the dream before he can discover, and eventually win the prize that is symbolically indicated. Thus, Endymion's sincere reliance on the truth of his sensations gives him the necessary sense of direction for a fruitful pursuit of his dream's meaning, a sense of direction which the confused "knight-at-arms" in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" lacks.

Endymion's understanding of the role of natural beauty in the generation of his dream and his faith in the truth of intense feelings provide him with a sense of mission but not necessarily the goal. He is yet to attain the goal he seeks because the ideal which he associates with the dream is yet to be tested on his pulses. His dream prefigures an ideal but his understanding of the ideal is still confused and limited. He even perceptively states the ideal he hardly understands:

> Wherein lies happiness? In that which becks
> Our ready minds to fellowship divine,
> A fellowship with essence; till we shine,
> Full alchemiz'd, and free of space. (I, 777-80)

And yet, he does not perceive how the ready minds of the

Latmians have been beckoned--albeit in an "innocent" manner--to have fellowship with the essence in the worship of Pan, a worship from which Endymion recoils. His mere statement of the aesthetic ideal is not coterminous with an intimate understanding of what he has said. His state of mind parallels that of an individual who has stumbled upon a philosophical axiom which he repeats to others even though he is yet to test it on his pulses for its deeper significance.

That Endymion is yet to realize the profound import of the aesthetic ideal which he states in the first book is obvious from his erroneous belief that Cynthia represents an ideal that is exclusive from, and opposed to, the lives and concerns of the Latmians. Since he generally considers "the essence" to be mutually exclusive from "the actual" at this point, he represents poets who immaturely regard imaginative experiences and creations as superior, and unrelated to the normal world. As part of his training, Endymion or the poet-in-training must learn to relate his visions to the real world. It is thus appropriate that all the ordeals that are to be undertaken by him should test his conception of "love" since love presupposes some form of relationship between two things, situations or persons.

The celebration of ideal love in the introductory section of the second book of Endymion is an attempt to reveal an intimate bond between love and the beauty that was celebrated in the first book. Furthermore, the praise of ideal love highlights the symbolic link between Endymion's quest for the love of Cynthia and the poet's search for the aesthetic ideal or his struggle to actualize the poetic potential of his imagination. The "joys and pains" of love represent the joys and pains of imaginative adventures, and demonstrate the identity of the paths of love and poetry (II, 36). The relation between art and love is established in the poem when Endymion beholds Cynthia in a dream; thus making Cynthia the ideal of art and love which the Latmians symbolically acknowledge in their worship of Pan. The act of worship by the Latmians springs from love, and a belief in imaginative truths--a love and a belief which Endymion is unable to appreciate. While he pines away because of his supposed loss of the love of Cynthia, he at the same time "refuses" to reciprocate the love of his people by suspending his rigid identity and joining them in the worship of Pan. Since he is unable to exercise the empathic quality of his imagination, he is temporarily barred from the essence of his dream and from the significance of the festival of his subjects.

The various ordeals that Endymion undergoes can be related to aspects of the Keatsian scheme of Soul-making. His trials take place mainly in the chamber of Maiden-Thought. In a broad sense, all his visions of, and supposed contacts with Cynthia represent his exploration of the bright effect of the chamber, while his reactions to the loss of the visions signal his exploration of the dark effect. His intense experiencing of both effects reveals the thoroughness with which he explores each effect and guarantees his progress to the next chamber. His meetings with lovers--Alpheus and Arethusa, Glaucus and Scylla, Venus and Adonis--in the course of his quest, provide the means for his gradual discovery of the link between the dark and bright effects of the chamber, while his eventual discovery of the identity of Cynthia and the Indian maiden is the crowning experience of the chamber of Mature-Thought. Similarly, in relation to the status of artistic creations, Endymion's adventure effectively outlines the poet's quest for the significance of his imaginative dreams and creations. Endymion's yearning for a Cynthia that is unrelated to Latmos becomes the nascent poet's temptation to make his imaginative creations absolute ideals that are unrelated to life. Endymion's "disconsolate" reactions to the supposed loss of Cynthia--evident in his distortion of natural conditions (I, 691-700) and in his apathy towards the needs of the Latmians--symbolize imaginative activities that "venom" the earth ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 175) by creating and feeding "upon the burrs,/And thorns of life." For Keats, imaginative creations that either paint a bright visionary picture of a life without ills or portray the world as "a vale of tears" are products of the unpoetic manifestation of the human imagination. Hence, the need for Endymion or the aspiring poet to learn the proper use of his imagination precipitates the quest for an ideal in which a harmonious relationship is forged between the ideal and the actual, between artistic creations and the real world. Endymion's quest for Cynthia thus symbolically depicts the poet's progress through the chambers of Thought, and also his attempts to actualize the aesthetic potential of his imagination.

Endymion's meeting with Venus and Adonis in the underworld is important in his quest. The myth of Adonis and Venus--because it is an imaginative representation of the cause of seasonal changes in the real world--dramatizes the interrelation between the ideal and the actual, between the artistic and normal worlds. Evert rightly points out that the Venus-Adonis myth is particularly relevant to Endymion because he is a mortal who seeks an immortal lover: "Since Adonis is a mortal who achieved immortality as the beloved of a goddess, he is an appropriately encouraging sign to Endymion at this stage of his trial."[99] But Endymion neither perceives this relation between himself and Adonis nor fully comprehends the message of the myth. Nevertheless, he derives some encouragement from Venus's advice to him about how perseverance will eventually lead him to success. Perhaps the best encouragement he gets, is the strong impact which Adonis's awakening to the splendour of spring makes on his soul. Overcome by the prospect of the beauty of spring, Endymion's soul imaginatively associates the natural beauty that is integral to the awakening of Adonis from slumber with the beauty that engendered his initial dream about Cynthia. He recreates the dream, Cynthia reappears, and a consummation takes place (II, 686-700).

The consummation of love between Endymion and Cynthia in this scene is, as has been noted by most critics, sensual.[100] While Pettet's characterization of the scene as that of "unabashed eroticism, vulgar and sickly sentimental by turns,"[101] is rather harsh, it nevertheless aptly represents the feeling of most critics about the apparent indecency of the scene. Yet, the scene serves an important purpose which most critics often overlook. It faithfully depicts the protagonist's new but mistaken definition of the ideal which he seeks. In the first book of the poem, Endymion conceives of the ideal as "spiritual" and unrelated to the material world, but in the second book, he views the ideal as erotic, for he celebrates the sensual as the "essence":

> Now that I have tasted her sweet soul
> All other depths are shallow: essences,
> Once spiritual, are like muddy lees,
> Meant but to fertilize my earthly root,
> And make my branches lift a golden fruit
> Into the bloom of Heaven. (II, 904-9)

Evidently, Endymion confuses the ideal with the erotic; hence, it is reasonable to suggest that his prayer for Alpheus and Arethusa is less humanitarian than is usually supposed by critics of Keats's works. It may well be that he wishes them a consummation that is basically sensual in nature. His wish for their happiness can hardly go beyond his present understanding of the ideal that brings happiness to lovers.

Since Endymion's wish for the fulfilment of the love of Alpheus for Arethusa reflects his limited understanding of love at this stage, it is necessary that he should learn more about love, especially its disinterested sympathy. After all, the love which the Latmians expect from him is that which transcends mere animal fulfilments. The "sympathy of love" which Endymion must know before he can win Cynthia is the attribute that enables one individual to suspend his selfish needs for the sake of another person, an attribute which Bate rightly calls "the sympathetic potentiality of the imagination."[102] This sympathy is symbolically related to the ability of an artist to suspend his instinctual and egotistical identity, and take on the identity of his subject in order to perceive and depict it objectively.

Endymion's meeting with Glaucus is the beginning of his training in the objective sympathy of love. The pathetic figure of Glaucus coupled with the penetrating message of the scroll make very strong impact on him. His self-centred life is almost automatically changed as he willingly takes part in the revival of the ship-wrecked lovers. He also participates in the celebrations in honour of love--celebrations that go beyond the "mundane" elements that Endymion was once inclined to regard as the essence of love. Though rather unconscious of the new outlook on love that he has now willingly embraced, Endymion is prepared for a meeting with the Indian maiden. In his initial meeting with her, his unconscious knowledge comes to the fore, making his love for her a disinterested one that is geared towards helping her out of her sorrow. He has some moments of relapse to "spiritual" yearnings and erotic dreams, but on the whole, he shows a preference for a life with the Indian maiden. His love of the Indian, however, occasionally leads him to temporary relapses in which he considers the actual to be the sole reality that is unrelated to the ideal. His lament, "I have clung/To nothing, lov'd nothing, nothing seen/Or felt but a great dream" (IV, 136-8), while it is another wrong reaction to the situation before him, propels him towards the ultimate realization that the ideal and the ordinary are inseparably fused. The Indian maiden's initial rejection of his love is an answer to his unfounded fears about dream ideals, and this rejection helps him to re-examine his vision. He then later realizes that the "spirit form" of the Indian is Cynthia while the "material form" of Cynthia is the Indian maiden. This realization signals the attainment of the real goal of his quest and represents the poet's actualization of the aesthetic potential of his imagination.

Just as the crowning experience of Endymion's quest is his winning of Cynthia's love, so also is the highest prize for the aspiring poet the attainment of the aesthetic ideal. The achievement of the ultimate goal is a factor of Endymion's or the poet's intimate realization of the relevance of the dream or visionary world to the Latmian or normal world. While his intense feelings are the guarantee for an eventual victory, the various ordeals serve as means for testing his visions against reality. By finally understanding the aesthetic use of the human imagination, Endymion or the poet is able to partake intimately of the aesthetic ideal which manifests itself in the interrelation of dreams and reality, of the vitalized actuality, the ideal and the actual. Thus, in Endymion, Keats demonstrates the truth of visionary experiences and the reality of imaginatively modified experiences.

Keats's conception of the poetic imagination is, therefore, "a unified one." Thorpe expresses only one aspect of this truth when he suggests that Keats believes that the poet flies "to his dream world but in his flight he does not escape reality: rather he carries with him, to shape and inform his vision, the stored up experiences of a life spent in a sympathetic contact with his fellow men."[103] And Stillinger states the other aspect when he maintains that a poetic flight to the dream world furnishes the poet with experiences that he draws upon in his normal life.[104] Considered in conjunction with one another, what Thorpe and Stillinger state, represents the complete Keatsian conception of the poetic imagination, a conception which Wasserman effectively reflects in what he calls the "mystic oxymoron." "Between the realm of the merely human . . . and the immortal . . . there is in the Keatsian cosmology," says Wasserman, "the knife-edge where the two meet and are indistinguishably present."[105] Thus, Keats conceives of the poetic imagination as a faculty which, capturing the interpenetration of the ideal and the ordinary in the realm of mystic oxymoron, creates poetic visions and also vitalizes veridical reality within the framework of the comprehensive knowledge of the world and life that is gained in the chamber of Mature-Thought.

CHAPTER IV

THE AESTHETIC IDEAL

1

When Keats wrote "Sleep and Poetry" in the summer of 1816, he expressed the wish "for ten years that [he] may overwhelm/[Himself] in poesy; so [he] may do the deed/That [his] soul has to itself decreed" (96-8). However, as early as January 1818, when he wrote the sonnet titled "When I have fears," he was pretty certain of the imminence of a death that would inevitably prevent him from overwhelming himself in poesy or beauty, and from gleaning and storing the riches or beauties with which his brain teemed. Therefore, like one writing his own epitaph, he states in a letter to Fanny Brawne, February 1820, "If I should die, I have left no immortal works behind me--nothing to make my friends proud of my memory--but I have lov'd the principle of beauty in all things and if I had had time I would have made myself remember'd."[1]

Evident in this "memorial" is Keats's consideration of immortal works as great poetic creations that derive their profundity and immortality from being able to embody, in an effective manner, the essential beauty which the poet perceives in all things. Since he also implies that these "eternal works" are the sources of the immortality of their creators, it is natural that, in contemplating his impending early death, Keats should express disappointment at the possibility of not having enough time to produce works that would effectively reflect his love of beauty after his death. Nevertheless, he draws some consolation from his love of "the principle of beauty in all things" because he believes that "the supreme thing in life is beauty."[2] Aware that the love of beauty is the ultimate human achievement from which all enduring acts of creation spring,[3] Keats maintains that his love and knowledge of the essential beauty of the world--however inadequately this beauty is embodied in his poetic works--are sufficient to give him some measure of eternity.

Essentially, Keats views all great or immortal poetic works as "beauties," through which all great poets gain immortality. In "How Many Bards Gild the Lapse of Time," for instance, he maintains that all important poetic works of previous generations are "beauties, earthly and sublime" (4). As the title of the sonnet suggests, the poetic beauties and the poets who created them are one and the same; hence, the bards can gild the lapse of time and continuously exhibit their beauties in a timeless context. The earthly nature of these beauties signify their existence in the normal world while their sublime nature is a tribute to their timelessness. Keats's wish to overwhelm himself in poesy may thus be seen as a wish to explore the essential beauty in the world, while the "deed/

That [his] soul has to itself decreed" may be seen as that of ultimately creating lasting beauties from those he enjoys. In fact, he tells Tom Keats of his wish to contribute his share to the beauty already existing in the world.[4] Hence, feeling the great impact of the Ambleside waterfall, he considers himself sufficiently inspired to be able to write poems that may be properly viewed as "a mite added to the mass of beauty."[5] For him, all previous aesthetic works--perhaps with his share eventually added--are immortal works that constitute the mass of beauty which poets create "from grand materials" and the "events of this wide world" ("Sleep and Poetry," 81), and put into "etherial existence for the relish" of all.[6]

Implicit in this equation of great artistic works with beauties is Keats's belief that immortal works are enduring embodiments of "the principle of beauty in all things." It is therefore natural that he feels that poets fashion these beauties from materials in the phenomenal world and from man's experiences of existence. In other words, Keats maintains that all subjects, be they sources of pleasure or pain, are potentially replete with the beauty that informs the whole world. This assumption underlies his treatment of various subjects in his poems. Keats also believes that love or the love of beauty is the aesthetic ideal which inspires all poets to seek and depict the beauty of the world: "Wherever beauty dwells,/In gulph or aerie, mountains or deep dells/In light, in gloom, in star or blazing sun,/[Love] pointest the way and straight 'tis won" (Endymion, III, 94-7). Beauty, as revealed by love, becomes the irresistible Keatsian muse of poetry. It is the poetic muse that is present in dark elements of nature and life like "blazing sun" and "gloom," and also present in the bright side of things like "light" and "mountains." Poetic beauty unites the apparently contradictory elements of human life. Therefore, Keats's fascination with this kind of muse is more than what Leavis sees as Keats's worship of a beauty that is "a concentration upon the purely delightful in experience to the exclusion of the 'disagreeables.'"[7]

Keats's conception of the beauty that is his aesthetic ideal is, in some respects, Platonic. For instance, his contention that beauty is immanent in all things is more Platonic than Hazlitt's conditional statement in the "Essay on Beauty" that beauty "is in some way inherent in the object."[8] Keats's idea of beauty is thus partly analogous to the Platonic view that "beauty in every form is one and the same,"[9] making his ideal some form of "abstraction." "The mighty abstract idea I have of the beautiful in all things stifles the more divided and minute domestic happiness,"[10] he declares. For him, a poet's duty consists of seeking, exploring and depicting this beauty which inheres in nature and man's life, and which in a way, is a substitute for the Wordsworthian "Presence."[11] And yet, this beauty also resides within the poet himself, making the poet's quest for a beauty that is external to him somewhat like a search for what he already has. Nevertheless, another element of his view of beauty--his belief that poets attain immortality through the external existence of their beautiful works--parallels the Platonic assertion that "men who are creative in their souls" create beauties that guarantee them immortality.[12] In fact, Keats refers to immortal works or beauties as "souls of poets"[13] that serve as the means by which poets "hold lofty converse/With after times" ("Epistle to George Keats," 72-3).

The notion of beauty in Keats's works is un-Platonic in some other respects. For instance, the poet does not regard an individual example of beauty or "personal beauty as a trifle" that is an imperfect shadow of "the beauty absolute."[14] Rather, he conceives of individual instances of beauty as "particles" that are integral parts of the essential beauty in all things. The concept of an "abstract beauty" that exists apart from particulars is alien to the Keatsian system. His "abstract idea of beauty" is coterminous with the "mass of beauty" formed from various particulars.[15] "An amiable wife and sweet Children I contemplate as part of that Beauty, but I must have a thousand of those beautiful particles to fill up my heart,"[16] he declares. Moreover, Keats does not believe in the Platonic progression from particular beauties to the absolute or ideal beauty--a progress "from the beauties of the earth upwards to the beauty absolute."[17] The Platonic steps or stages leading to absolute beauty--"from one to two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions . . . and from fair notions to the notion of absolute beauty or the essence of beauty"[18]--are irrelevant to the Keatsian system. For Keats, a passionate concentration on anything, irrespective of whatever Platonic stage the object is classed in, leads the poet to the discovery of the essential beauty in all things.

Keats's idiosyncratic definition of "essential beauty" explains why he always stresses what Goldberg refers to as "the corporeality of beauty rather than its abstracted quality."[19] He usually identifies specific examples of this beauty rather than discusses its abstract qualities. For instance, he calls the myth of Endymion "A thing of beauty" (Endymion, I, 1), talks about specific beauties which he finds in the works of other poets, and expresses his commitment to creating beauties in his own works. For him, Shakespeare's sonnets abound in beauties: "I ne'er found so many beauties in the Sonnets--they seem to be full of many fine things said unintentionally in the intensity of working out conceits."[20] Also, in the sonnet titled "On Seeing a Lock of Milton's Hair," Keats summarizes Milton's achievements in terms of the beauties that he creates: "By all that from thy mortal lips did roll/And by the kernel of thy earthly love/Beauty, in things on earth, and things above/I swear!" (19-22). And, in the "Ode to Apollo," after depicting the particular beauties that the poets he considers to be great contribute to Apollo's eternal music, he concludes by calling all the beauties created by these bards and Apollo, "eternal music." This eternal music represents the essential beauty.

To consider the beauties created by poets like Milton and Shakespeare, among others, as constituting part of the principle of beauty in all things implies that Keats regards poetic creations as veridical realities that are part of the beauty in all things. Indeed, he maintains that these beauties exist side by side or in conjunction with all other realities in the world. For him, the current of beauty flows through products of the poetic imagination as well as through all things in the phenomenal world. This conviction of Keats is even more obvious in his discussion of the nature of "Ethereal things" because he attributes[21] the same measure of reality to Shakespeare's passages as he attributes to natural elements like the sun, moon and stars. He contends that poetic beauties--insofar as they are products of the aesthetic imagination[22]--are integral parts of the beauty of the world. "What the imagination siezes as Beauty must be truth--whether it existed before or not,"[23] he declares. Thus, poetic works of beauty are true because they are real, making truth, beauty and reality, the same in this context.

This equation of beauties with truths or realities informs Keats's statements on the immortality of aesthetic works and their creators. Evidently, if beautiful works do not really exist after the mortal lives of their creators, then it is impossible to talk of the eternal existence of poets. Since aesthetic works eternally reflect their creators' visions of the aesthetic ideal of the world, it follows that what is of prime importance in the poets' lives--their distinctive visions of the world's beauty--lives on for ever. Hence, all great poets can be seen as being in constant communication with later generations.

The undying poetic beauties are, to Keats, the enduring souls of poets that are in communion with posterity. "The living pleasures [or beauties] of these bards" become "richer far posterity's award" ("Epistle to George Keats," 67-8). Poets of later generations have a double heritage of beauty. Inheriting the creations of the "dead" poets as well as the world from which they originally created, poets of later times are able to appreciate the dual existence of great poets of former times. Keats emphasizes this point in "Bards of Passion and of Mirth":

> Thus ye live on high, and then

On the earth you live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you
Where your other souls are joying
Never slumber'd, never cloying. (23-8)

The great poets have a timeless and dual existence because their works serve as the sources of, and guide to the principle of beauty in all things. The benefits which later generations of poets derive from the immortal works produced in former epochs are identical with those they gain from the beauty in nature and in their personal experiences of existence. Thus, inherited poetic beauties are as real as those personally experienced by poets in their life-time.

For Keats, the task of discovering and depicting the essential beauty in immortal works and in life itself is not easy, since it requires the aesthetic use of the human imagination. As has been demonstrated in the third chapter of this study, the proper use of the imagination or the actualization of the poetic potential of the imagination requires a rigorous training which is latent in Keats's scheme of Spirit-creation. Therefore, only an individual who is capable of rising above his selfish identity by means of the poetic imagination can become part of an external situation, experience it thoroughly, and perceive its beauty. By making all situations personally real to the individual, the aesthetic imagination enables him to perceive and create beautiful things. And, as has been noted in the previous chapter, Keats bases the reality or validity of all poetic works on the truth of the poetic imagination: "What the imagination siezes as Beauty must be truth, whether it existed before or not."[25] Since the aesthetic imagination is the only faculty which is capable of apprehending the beauty in all things, whatever it apprehends and creates on the basis of its beauty is true and real. The reality of poetic creations, expressed abstractly in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" as "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," is reinforced in Keats's works by references to particular examples of beauties. All these particular beauties are, for Keats, raised by art above the uncertainties of time and space; hence, "A thing of beauty . . . will never/Pass into nothingness" (Endymion, I, 1-3).

Although the truth of aesthetically fashioned things is guaranteed by their timeless existence, any individual wishing to partake of this truth must personally or imaginatively experience it. In the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," Keats insists that this truth, which exists only through the medium of beauty or the beauty which exists through the medium of truth, is the aesthetic ideal that all men must intimately enjoy if they are to live complete and worthwhile lives: "'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'--that is all/Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know" (V, 9-10).[26] The truth-beauty or beauty-truth, which is Keats's poetic capsule of the ideal of human existence in the world, can be known by only those who are capable of intimately experiencing the beauty in art and life--"for even axioms in philosophy are no axioms until they are proved on the pulses."[27] Through intense experiences the poetic individual gives free rein to the beauty within him which naturally flows out and unites with the beauty that flows through all things in the world. Coleridge aptly describes this process as "a silent communion of Spirit [or Beauty] with the Spirit [or Beauty] in nature"[28]--a process that simultaneously creates and releases the beauty in the material world. Thus, "the 'greeting of the Spirit' is itself as much a part of nature or reality as its object."[29]

The manner in which a receptive reader perceives and participates in the truth-beauty of an immortal work is, for Keats, identical with that in which a poet apprehends and participates in the beauty of his own world. Therefore, in partaking of the beauty of art, the reader is actually reliving the poet's experience. "We read fine things," Keats states, "but never feel their beauties to the full until we have gone the same steps as the Author."[30] Just as the poet's imagination enables him to transcend his selfish nature in order to be able to capture the beauty of his subject, so also does the reader's imagination aid him in his attempt to appreciate the beauty of art. The process by which the poet discovers the beauty in his subject is usually re-enacted whenever the reader seeks to discover the beauty of a work of art.

Keats insists that the reality of the beauty in any experience is usually established through a passionate employment of the poetic imagination. All proper involvements with beauty entail an intimate use of the human imagination: "all our passions . . . are in their sublime, creative of essential beauty."[31] As has been indicated earlier, sublime passions are basically intense feelings that can intimately perceive the beauty which is immortalized in great works. Since the individual's intimate sensations are invariably true to him, Keats contends that the beauty which the individual apprehends in a state of passionate excitement must be true. Therefore, intense or sublime passions--insofar as they inform the poetic imagination--are the means to the discovery and subsequent depiction of the world's essential beauty, and they also serve as the means to authenticate the created beauty.

For Keats, the human passions do not only guarantee beauty's truth, they also ascertain truth's reality by clearly defining the beauty of truth. He writes, "I never can feel certain of any truth but from a clear perception of its Beauty. A year ago I could not understand in the slightest degree Raphael's cartoons--now I begin to read them a little."[32] Although aware that some of his contemporaries take the truth of Raphael's cartoons for granted, Keats sets out to verify their truth for himself by personally seeking their beauty. His belief that the human passions cannot effectively respond to truth except by perceiving its beauty explains why he approaches all experiences through their beauty. He contends in "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" that the truth of Homer's immortal works became patent to him when he attained a clear perception of the Homeric beauties in Chapman's translation. Symons is thus correct in declaring that "With [Keats], beauty was always a part of feeling, always a thing to quicken his pulses."[33]

Inasmuch as the human passions cannot, within Keats's system, directly perceive truth except through the medium of its beauty, and inasmuch as the authenticity of truth depends upon the passions, the certainty of any truth depends principally on its beauty. Moreover, since human passions authenticate all things and experiences by perceiving beauty in them, it is reasonable to conclude that whenever Keats refers to the aesthetic ideal as beauty, he also assumes its truth or reality. And although he resolves beauty and truth into his single aesthetic ideal, beauty still remains the primary term and focal point of the ideal. Little wonder then that he maintains that "with a great poet the sense of beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all considerations."[34]

2

Keats's enthronement of beauty as his poetic ideal has unfortunately misled many critics into regarding him as an unquestionable aesthete. Arthur Symons, for instance, explicitly declares the poet an aesthete when he remarks that "Keats, when the phrase had not yet been invented, practised the theory of art for art's sake."[35] Although Symons does not rigidly apply the standards of nineteenth century Aestheticism in his determination of the value of Keats's writings, Leavis's objection to Symons's consideration of Keats as an early proponent of the theory of art for art's sake is in order. Leavis argues that "Keats's aestheticism . . . does not mean anything as the cutting off of the special valued order from direct vulgar living . . . as is implied in the aesthetic antithesis of Art and Life."[36] Insofar as Symons's proclaiming of Keats an early aesthete assumes that the poet regards the world of beauty as in opposition to the normal one, Leavis's objection is well grounded. Since Keats's notion of beauty is always informed by the harmonious relationship between art and life--a relationship which enhances the distinctive qualities of life and art--beauty as conceived by Keats is radically different from the beauty in the extreme views of pre-Raphaelites like Rossetti and Johnson. And since an extreme aesthete often substitutes his aesthetic ideal for the beauty of the actual world, Saito is right in suggesting that Keats classes the escapist aesthete "with the dreamer in 'The Fall of Hyperion.'"[37]

Although Leavis succeeds in identifying the main weakness of Symons's unqualified hailing of Keats as an aesthete, he does not dispute the fact that Keats can be broadly called an aesthete. In fact, he implicitly calls Keats an aesthete, attributing to him a form of aestheticism that is limited and, therefore, more objectionable than that of Symons. His contention that Keats's distinctive idea of beauty is that of "the delightful in experience to the exclusion of the 'disagreeables,'"[38] is incongruent with Keats's notion of beauty. What Leavis calls Keats's version of aestheticism is a disguised support for the rather unfortunate view of Keats as a poet of sheer sensuous luxuries. It is, indeed, partly reminiscent of those early reports about Keats's enjoyment of only "the external decorations of verse and emotional experiences,"[39] reports that highlight elements of Keats's verse that many critics still regard as the undesirable characteristics of his early poems and critical ideas.[40]

Basically, Leavis, like Garrod, believes that Keats's beauty is identical with "the exquisite sense of the luxurious."[41] However, while Garrod maintains that Keats's "'exquisite sense of the luxurious' luxuriates to consummate effects in Isabella and The Eve of St. Agnes,"[42] Leavis sees all Keats's poems as illustrations of Keats's relish for the purely delightful in experience. The great odes are, for Leavis, the ultimate manifestations of Keats's addiction to hedonistic beauty. He even distorts Keats's treatment of the theme of melancholy to suit his limited definition of Keats's aestheticism, insisting that the "Ode on Melancholy" is "one of the most obviously decadent developments of Beauty-addiction--of the cult of 'exquisite passions' and 'finest senses.'"[43] Even intense passions (which in Keats's view are the touchstone of the reality of all beautiful things) become, for Leavis, the means for Keats's perpetration of his decadent cult of delightful beauty. Needless to say that Leavis succeeds in establishing dubious standards for making all Keats's works perfect illustrations of his erroneous definition of Keats's version of aestheticism.

The only useful purpose served by Leavis's objection to Symons's rather unqualified consideration of Keats as an aesthete is to point out that Keats's idea of beauty is not "abstract" or transcendental. But this usefulness is nullified by his mistaken account of Keats's definition of beauty and the way this beauty operates in the world. He is obviously wrong in suggesting that Keats's idea of beauty precludes the "disagreeables" and borders on the sybaritic. As has been indicated earlier, Keats maintains that beauty is present in both pleasant and unpleasant circumstances of life. The element of beauty celebrated in poems like "On the Sea" and "Hadst Thou Liv'd in Days of Old" is quite different from that celebrated in "On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again" and the _Hyperion_ fragments. Thus, while the beauty of natural phenomena in "I Stood Tip-toe" and that of women in "Hadst Thou Liv'd in Days of Old" illustrate Leavis's sense of the delightful, the tragic beauties of the _Hyperion_ fragments illustrate a kind of beauty that transcends sybaritism. In fact, most of Keats's poems demonstrate the interpenetration of the painful and the pleasurable aspects of beauty. The great odes and the _Hyperion_ fragments are the most profound demonstrations of the complex beauty in Keats's works that an early poem like "To My Brother George" depicts by means of the apparently contradictory facets of the ocean's beauty: "The ocean with its vastness, its blue green/Its ships, its rocks, its caves, its hopes, its fears" (5-6). Evidently, Keats's concept of beauty is more subtle and complex than Leavis's statements suggest.

Douglas Bush does recognize the complexity of Keats's concept of beauty. Conscious of the fact that Keats descries beauty in pleasant and unpleasant experiences of life, he remarks that the central assumption in Keats's works is that "In a world of inexplicable mystery and pain, the experience of beauty is the one sure revelation of reality."[44] He argues, "if beauty is reality, the converse is likewise true, the reality of human experience of suffering can yield beauty in itself and in art."[45] In like manner, Gerard maintains that "There is truth (in a somewhat Platonic sense) in the Elysian vision of the first scene [captured in the 'Ode on a Grecian Urn'] and there is beauty in the vision of ordinary life, suffering, and death described in the second scene."[46] Hence, Wigod's belief that the tragic beauty of the Hyperion fragments and the "Epistle to J. H. Reynolds" is different from "the warm, pulsating beauty" of poems like Isabella and The Eve of St. Agnes,[47] can only be true if these rather different elements of the Keatsian aesthetic ideal are regarded as inseparable parts of the essential beauty in all things.

Keats's apparent worship of the beauty that he considers to be the aesthetic ideal can, however, be broadly regarded as a form of aestheticism that transcends hedonism. Since this beauty which Keats discerns in art and life subsumes important human truths, Saito seems to reflect the distinctive complexion of Keatsian aestheticism when he maintains that the poet "engages in art for life's sake."[48] Saito's declaration will, of course, fully represent Keats's position if it also implies that the poet engages in life for art's sake, for the harmonious interrelation of art and life is of cardinal importance in Keats's aestheticism. Sharp also correctly defines Keats's position--in spite of the broad religious significance that he attributes to the poet's aestheticism--when he maintains that Keats's notion of beauty is "human and functional."[49] In fact, Keats's aestheticism derives its distinctiveness from making the beauty of art and life serve some "practical purposes" in the lives of human beings.

Keats believes that, because the loveliness of beautiful things increases eternally, they become "joys for ever" by providing those who partake of their beauty "with a quiet bower . . . and a sleep/Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing" (Endymion, I, 2-5). All beautiful things in art and life are thus life-enhancing, for they are "a cheering light/Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,/That whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast/ They must be with us, or we die" (Endymion, I, 30-34). These beautiful things in art and life combine to form the "mass of beauty" which Keats also refers to as the "eternal poetry" without which he cannot exist.[50] As "friends to man, in the midst of all our woe" ("Ode on a Grecian Urn," V, 7-8), these beauties "soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man" ("Sleep and Poetry," 246-7). Thus, as poets create beautiful things and reveal those already in the world, they are actually wreathing

> A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
> Spite of despondence, of inhuman dearth
> Of noble natures, of gloomy days,
> Of all the unhealthy and o'er darkened ways
> Made for our searching eyes: yes, in spite of all,
> Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
> From our dark spirits. (Endymion, I, 6-13)

For Keats, all created and revealed beauties combine to produce "An endless fountain of immortal drink/Pouring into us from heaven's brink" (23-4) to give us comfort in this "World of Pains and troubles."[51]

Since Keats insists that the intense experiencing of the pains and pleasures of existence yields the essential beauty of the world to the individual, it is important to reiterate that his belief in the soothing and consoling effects of the poetic ideal does not imply that beauty is a means of escape from the bitter realities of the world.[52] Rather, the Keatsian aesthetic ideal "binds us to the earth" (Endymion, I, 7), enabling the poetic individual to partake intimately in both the delightful and the disheartening situations in life as he seeks the harmony of existence. Essentially, Keats's concept of the poetic ideal of beauty is comprised of two distinct but related elements or parts--the sybaritic and the tragic. The sybaritic element (which partly parallels what Leavis refers to as the only real indicator of Keats's aestheticism) "soothes the cares of man," while the tragic aspect of beauty (which Leavis considers to be absent from Keats's concept of the ideal)[53] "lifts the thoughts of man" ("Sleep and Poetry," 246-7). Intense human experiences reveal the harmonious relation of these elements of man's life and world to the passionate individual.

3

The foregoing discussion has established the complex and all-embracing nature of the Keatsian ideal of beauty which is variously referred to by Keats as "streaks of light," "eternal music," "souls of poets," "essential beauty," "the poetical in all things," and "Beauty is truth, truth beauty."[54] These various references extend and increase the significations of the aesthetic ideal. Nevertheless, the numerous shades of meaning suggested by these references fall into two main categories--beauty as the theme and beauty as the style of poetry or art. As the theme of all immortal works, Keats conceives of beauty as true knowledge, the source of power, and as a pointer to the comprehensive "moral" order of the world. As the style of poetry or art, beauty is organic form, and the source of creative excellence. Whether as style or theme, the Keatsian ideal is based on sensations rather than thoughts. And all his poems reflect this complex view of beauty in some manner.

Keats's consideration of beauty as the main theme of all great works of art--when viewed in relation to his scheme of Soul-making and his speculations on the chambers of the human mind--makes the perception and partaking of the aesthetic ideal analogous to the actualization of the poetic potential of the human imagination, or to the acquisition of true knowledge in the chamber of Mature-

Thought. The two elements of the essential beauty of all things--the delightful and the tragic--become symbols of the dark and bright effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought. An individual'a capability for experiencing each element intimately without confusing one with the other or regarding one as the sole reality of beauty qualifies him for the discovery of their basic unity in the third chamber or the chamber of Mature-Thought.

The individual's progress through the scheme of Spirit-creation for the purpose of acquiring the knowledge offered in the final stage can also be likened to his attempt to penetrate the essential beauty in all things. Within the scheme, all things or experiences may be considered to be "forms or substances in which dwells" the ideal. Since in the understanding of any form or substance the human passions serve as the only reliable means by which beauty is discovered, a passionate approach to this beauty is identical with an intense seeking after knowledge. It is a quest in which the individual strives to "explore all forms and substances/Straight homeward to their symbol-essences" (Endymion, III, 699-700). The symbol-essence of any form is beauty. Therefore, an understanding of this essence is knowledge.

The knowledge of beauty is available in all human conditions. Keats maintains that beauty can be found in all human experiences, for the state of passionate excitement that is capable of discovering the aesthetic ideal does not recognize the purely intellectual division between pain and pleasure. This knowledge, being identical with the perception of the immanent beauty of the world, reveals the harmonious wholeness of human experiences. Intense human passions create beauty by bringing together opposing extremes.[55] In Endymion, for instance, Cynthia, while being fervently involved in the pleasures of love, becomes suddenly aware of a feeling of pain which causes her to ask, "is grief contain'd/In the very deeps of pleasure?" (II, 823-4). A typically Keatsian answer to this question can be drawn from the "Ode on Melancholy":

> Ay, in the very temple of delight
> Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
> Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
> Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
> His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
> And be among her cloudy trophies hung.
> (III, 5-10)

The presence of Melancholy's shrine in the temple of delight is only recognized by those who can intimately feel delight. Only those capable of intense passionate involvement in pleasure can penetrate the substratum of pain. Until one is able to perceive the pain that is integral to pleasure, it is not possible to experience the real joy which beauty offers to man. This perception of beauty in which opposing conditions are united is the source of real joy.

For Keats, the cares of man in this world are soothed by the fervent participation in the beauty formed from the coalescence of opposing extremes. In The Eve of St. Agnes, for instance, Madeline's ability to discern the relationship between her dream and reality, to perceive the qualities of her ideal in the "physical" or real Porphyro, and to accept the interpenetration of the spiritual and the material, enables her to embrace the essential beauty of the world which gives her joy in her love for a human rather than spiritual Porphyro. She passionately seeks the blessing of St. Agnes--the vision of her true lover in a dream--by faithfully performing the rites associated with the St. Agnes Eve's vision (V-VIII). Her sincere dedication to the pursuit of her goal results in a delightful dream in which she beholds an angelic Porphyro with "a voice at sweet tremble," "spiritual clear eyes," and "immortal looks" (XXXV, 2, 3, 7).

Madeline's encounter with the angelic Porphyro is, however, not an encounter with the essential beauty which gives the individual real joy. Rather, it is an experiencing of the delightful or partial beauty that is comparable to a taste of the bright effect of the chamber of Maiden-Thought. Her awakening from the dream and partaking of the reality of existence also parallels the darkness of the same chamber. Like the knight-at-arms in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Madeline awakens from a sweet dream and experiences the apparent contrast between the dream and reality. Her intial reaction to the normal world after the dream--alarm at "the painful change" (XXXIV, 3) and feeling of "eternal woe" (XXXV, 8) or anguish--is identical with that of the knight-at-arms. Nevertheless, while the sensing of change and feeling of woe aid Madeline in her attempts to establish a harmonious link between her dream and reality, they cause the knight-at-arms to bemoan the lost bliss of the dream and to substitute anguish for joy. Although Stillinger has a contrary view of the situation,[56] Madeline, by perceiving the unity of the angelic and real Porphyro, awakens from the illusions of her dream and embraces the beauty which unites the dream and reality. In the intensity of joy, the opposition between dream and reality evaporate: "Into her dream he melted, as the rose/Blendeth its odour with the violet/Solution sweet" (XXXVI, 5-8).

Unlike Madeline, Lycius in Lamia is the unfortunate victim of the destructiveness of false beauty and joy emanating from a partial perception of the nature of the world's beauty. Lycius's misfortune arises from his inability to distinguish between false beauty and joy on the one hand, and true beauty and joy on the other. The mirage-like nature of the beauty and joy which Lamia offers him is obvious to the reader early in the poem. Lamia is "not one hour old" before she shows signs of having a "sciential brain" which can "unperplex bliss from its neighbour pain/Define their pettish limits, and estrange/ Their points of contact" (I, 191-4). She puts her unusual powers to work almost immediately and creates a world of absolute bliss in which pain is non-existent. Then she prevails upon Lycius, and makes him abandon the real world for the Lamian one of airy bliss.

Overcome by Lamia's beauty, Lycius is unable to detect the inherent fallacy in Lamia's argument in which the normal world of Corinth is seen as "empty of immortality and bliss" (I, 278). As a student of Philosophy, he ought to have recognized the airy nature of the Lamian world of absolute bliss. Also, if he were able to understand the essential beauty of life, he may have saved himself from the agony and death which attend the destruction of his illusions. "Tangled in Lamia's mesh" (I, 295), he yearns to escape from his mortal nature. His recoil from Apollonius after his involvement with Lamia (I, 362-377) represents a desire to escape the intensely beautiful fate of mankind.

Apollonius's role at the end of the poem has led to the common belief that the Lamian world of the lovers would have been saved from utter destruction if the Philosopher had not mercilessly destroyed it with cold facts. Keats even rails against Apollonius's approach to the airy world of beauty and bliss:

> Do not all charms fly
> At the mere touch of cold philosophy?
> Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,

> Conquer all mysteries by the rule and line,
> Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine--
> Unweave the rainbow, as it erewhile made
> The tender-person'd Lamia melt into shade.
> (II, 229-30; 234-8)[57]

For the poet, Apollonius represents a kind of truth that is devoid of the complementing aspect of beauty. In fact, Apollonius is unreceptive to the world of love in which Lycius is caught. Being unable to experience intimately the beauty of his philosophical truths, Apollonius cannot penetrate the substratum of truth in the Lamian beauty. Since his approach to his ward's experience is based on the conflict between truth and beauty, he can be regarded as an advocate of the unhealthy fragmentation of human experience --a fragmentation which destroys the sense of wholeness necessary in the perception of beauty.

In spite of Apollonius's villainy, Lycius is himself responsible for both the destruction of his airy world and his subsequent death. His ignorance of the illusory foundation upon which the Lamian world is built causes him to seek its authentication in the normal world of reality. He is apparently unconscious of the fact that he has already escaped from reality by accepting the Lamian conception of beauty and truth. By arranging a public marriage, Lycius exhibits his ignorance of the true nature of his visionary experiences. Keats reveals Lycius's ignorance and folly when he asks, "O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout/The silent-blessing fate, warm cloister'd hours/And show to common eyes these secret bowers?" (II, 147-9). By making his secret dream-world public, Lycius inadvertently invites its destruction. Moreover, by escaping from the world of pain into that of absolute bliss, he renders himself vulnerable to pain. His inability to cope with the pain attendant upon normal human existence reveals how far he has escaped from reality and its everlasting beauty. Consequently, incapable of "bearing naked truths" (Hyperion, II, 202), Lycius loses both his bliss and his life: "And Lycius' arms were empty of delight/As were his limbs of life, from that same night" (Lamia, II, 307-8).

Lycius's fate can befall anyone who is unable to experience the beauty in this world of apparent contradictions. Basically, beauty is the "point of contact" between "bliss . . . and its neighbour pain" (Lamia, I, 191-4). Hence, whoever is unable to partake of the world's beauty is vulnerable to one-eyed perceptions of various situations and prone to self-destruction like Lycius. In the "Ode to a Nightingale," for example, the poet is saved from utter destruction or death by his ability to apprehend the beauty which unites the real world of pain and the nightingale's world of ideal melody. Through intense passionate involvement in beauty, the poet is able to take part in all that both worlds have to offer without being lost in either of the worlds. As in Lamia, the two worlds are apparently in opposition to each other. The nightingale's world is a counterpart of the Lamian one, while Corinth and the real world are the same:

> . . . where men sit and hear each other groan;
> Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
> Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
> Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
> And leaden-eyed despairs
> Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
> Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.
> (III, 4-10)

In contrast to these stark realities of existence is the nightingale's world of bliss and unceasing melody.

Although the distinction between the world of bliss and that of pain is fundamentally the same in Lamia and in the "Ode to a Nightingale," there is a remarkable difference in the manner in which the protagonists of both poems react to the opposing worlds. While Lycius's total absorption in the Lamian bliss excludes the possibility of its opposite, the poet's delight in the nightingale-song does not prevent him from an understanding of the painful possibilities of the real world. Consequently, while both Lycius and the poet enjoy complete involvement in visionary bliss, only the poet retains an intense feeling of the beauty of the opposite state, a beauty which enables him to return to the normal world unscathed: "Forlorn! the very word is like a bell/To toll me back from thee to my sole self/Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well" (VIII, 1-3). In the case of Lycius, the fancy cheats so well that there is nothing capable of tolling him back to his "sole self." Absorbed in his dream-world, Lycius loses the necessary self-consciousness[58] which can make his transition to the real world possible.

Since beauty provides the point of aesthetic unity between opposites, it can be considered to be the link between art and life. In a sense, the Lamian world is comparable to art, while the world represented by Apollonius symbolizes the unpleasant truths of life. In fact, the aesthetic ideal offered by the Lamian existence is a false ideal of beauty, for it is unrelated to the realities of normal existence. It is a form of artistic escapism which cuts the individual loose from life. Although the poet is receptive to the ideals which the nightingale's song offers in the ode, he remains truly conscious of the beauties of the real world. For him, the nightingale's ideal complements that of the real world; it does not replace "the world of circumstances."[59] Art is not viewed as the source of escape from the world. Rather, it is seen as capable of furnishing the receptive individual with the beauty which "binds us to the earth/Spite of despondence" (Endymion, I, 7-8).

The harmonious balance which the aesthetic ideal of beauty maintains between art and life is also aptly depicted in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn." On the urn, some intense aspects of the world and of human experience are poetically represented. In the second stanza, for instance, the trees portrayed are eternally green with leaves, a youth is portrayed singing continually, and a bold lover, for ever poised for a kiss, is shown in relation to his lady who is in an eternal gesture of reciprocating that love:

> Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
> Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
> Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
> Though winning near the goal--yet, do not grieve;
> She cannot fade, though thou hadst not thy bliss,
> For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair! (5-10)

In various ways, these figures on the urn represent certain aspects of life. For instance, "the trees that can never be bare" are products of an artistic "arrest" of the process of change, integral to the yearly seasonal cycle. Since in reality "four seasons fill the measure of the year," the poem, by presenting the effect of one of the four seasons on the trees, cannot be taken as representing the whole truth of life in this depiction. Rather, it must be recognized that the eternally green trees capture an imaginative prolongation and intensification of part of the whole truth or beauty of the world. Hazlitt refers to this kind of poetic enhancement of part of reality as "the abstraction of anything from the circumstances that weaken its effect, or lessen our admiration of it [and] it is also the filling up of the outline of truth or beauty."[60] To perceive the essential beauty in these trees, it is not enough to regard this "abstracted" and "enhanced" summer-beauty of the trees as the total reality. The summer-beauty must be seen in perspective or in relation to the beauty of the other seasons. The artistic prolongation of one condition, therefore, must not be mistaken for the whole truth of the trees' beauty.

The fair youth who "can not leave/[His] song" is also an artistic intensification of an aspect of human activity. The truth and beauty of one who sings eternally is restricted to the artistic milieu. However, since the youth's song indirectly points to other possibilities in the real world, it is a useful contribution to life. Similarly, the lover's everlasting poise for a kiss is related to the normal world by its capability for suggesting other truths of life. The lover "cannot kiss" because his "move" is arrested just before the act takes place. The aesthetic arrest of the lover's action raises it above change and time, both of which are crucial factors in man's normal existence. While this artistic arrest guarantees the lover constancy, it denies him the warmth and consummation that are possible in real life. Yet, the warmth of real life cannot be "frozen" as in art, because change is an integral part of it. Since art and life have distinctively different beauties, no one of them can become a complete substitute for the other. The "arrested moment" in art cannot replace the "changing instant" in life. Art and life must complement each other in order to produce the essential beauty that is coterminous with true knowledge.

For Keats, a knowledge of the aesthetic ideal can be derived from an intense feeling of sorrow or from an intimate identification with those having sorrowful experiences. Beauty, for him, can dwell with sorrow. In some instances, the intense feeling of anguish leads to the wisdom which is beauty,[61] while in others, sorrow provides its victim with the beauty which lessens the sting of pain. In Endymion, the beauty of the Indian maiden, in spite of her sorrow, is what enlists Endymion's sympathy. The Indian maiden herself, somewhat puzzled by her own beauty in her sorrowful condition, seeks to explore the enigma in "O Sorrow." She poses a number of questions in her attempt to penetrate the beauty which is integral to her anguish:

> "O Sorrow,
> Why dost borrow
> The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips?--
> To give maiden blushes
> To the white rose bushes?
> Or is't thy dewy hand the daisy tips?
>
> "O Sorrow,
> Why dost borrow
> The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?--
> To give the glow-worm light?
> Or, on a moonless night,
> To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry?
>
> "O Sorrow,
> Why dost borrow
> The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue?--
> To give at evening pale
> Unto the nightingale,
> That thou mayst listen the cold dews among?"
> (Endymion, IV, 146-163)

The maiden, unaware that the beauty she sees in sorrow is integral to it, feels that the beauty is "borrowed" from joy. She does not seem to understand that beauty dwells in both sorrow and joy, even though her immediate experience shows her that beauty is a part of sorrow. She sings about "mellow ditties from a mourning tongue" but does not intimately understand that, in spite of the fact that "a mourning tongue" belongs to one whose bereavement is cause for sorrow, the mourning tongue's "mellow ditties" help to make sorrow beautiful or at least reduce its sting.

Keats's understanding of beauty which coexists with sorrow is discernible in his depiction of the anguish of Saturn in Hyperion. His description of the appearance of the "gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone" (I, 4), is redeemed from the ugliness usually associated with sadness by a process which imbues Saturn with sculptural beauty.[62] His portrayal of Thea is even more intense, and incorporates a comment on beauty which transcends Thea's sorrow:

> Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,
> Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,
> When sages looked to Egypt for their lore.
> But oh! how unlike marble was that face:
> How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
> Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.
> (I, 31-6)

Keats concentrates on the beauty of Thea as he unravels the sad tale of the fall of the Titans because it makes the tale as a whole beautiful. Similarly, in depicting the exhumation of Lorenzo's remains in Isabella, Keats reduces the ghastly nature of the scene by striving to capture the necessary "shape of beauty which moves the pall/From our dark spirits" (Endymion, I, 12-13). Keats believes that no matter how sad a tale may be, if it is approached in a passionate manner, beauty can be created from it.[63] A passionate experiencing of horror elevates the horror to a realm of beauty.

A knowledge of this beauty which underlies all experiences is, in Keats's view, a source of power or "sovereignty" for the poetic individual. Apollo, for instance, is deified in Hyperion as a result of his knowledge of the unity of all things in beauty. His intimate experiencing of the aesthetic ideal of beauty makes his power or sovereignty immediately perceptible to all who see him, for there is always "a glow of beauty in his eyes" (II, 237). Apollo is himself conscious of the power he has derived from an intimate knowledge of the world. Though he does not connect his knowledge with beauty as he proclaims it to those around him, it is obvious that his knowledge derives its relevance to human life from its relation to beauty: "Knowledge enormous makes a God of me" (III, 113). Therefore, according to Balslev, "the basic idea of Hyperion is beauty as a governing principle of the world."[64]

In a sense, even Oceanus's mere recognition of Apollo as the new and powerful embodiment of the beauty which rules the world confers a measure of power on him. It is no mere coincidence that Saturn, in his moment of utmost grief, turns to Oceanus for consolation. Concluding his long review of what he considers to be the reason for the fall of the Titans, Saturn specifically asks Oceanus's opinion about the situation:

> "O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's ear
> "Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,
> "Ponderest high and deep; and in thy face
> "I see, astonied, that severe content
> "Which comes of thought and musing: give us help."
> (II, 162-6)

Saturn's faith in Oceanus's depth of thought arises from his recognition of Oceanus's apparent feeling of contentment in spite of all the woes of the Titans. By understanding the course of events that led to the dethroning of the Titans, Oceanus seems to have embraced the beauty which gives him solace. Therefore, Saturn can ask of Oceanus some balm to soothe his troubled spirit, a balm which things of beauty give to all receptive minds in this world of pains and troubles.

Though Saturn asks for "some shape of beauty [to move] away the pall/From [his] sad spirits" (Endymion, I, 12-13), his receptiveness to beauty seems to diminish as Oceanus discloses what truth he discovered in his intense rumination. Oceanus's preamble to the truth emphasizes the inherent beauty in the apparently hopeless situation of the

Titans:

> "Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain;
> "O folly! for to bear all naked truths,
> "And to envisage circumstances, all calm,
> "That is the top of sovereignty." (II, 202-5)

The stoicism of bearing all naked truths is revealed as that which helps individuals to view all impending circumstances in calmness. Power or sovereignty can be a reward for an intimate but calm experiencing of the disheartening truths of existence. Oceanus is himself an example of an individual given the role of leadership because of his equanimity in the face of trying circumstances. He becomes the guide or governor of his fellow Titans, for he understands the bitter-sweet nature of their fall and the truth or responsibility of Apollo's beauty. And to make it possible for the other Titans to behold the beauty and truth in the conditions leading to the fall, Oceanus first reviews the historical process or natural evolution which brought the Titans to power some time ago. Wigod effectively summarizes Oceanus's review as follows:

> First there was Chaos and parental Darkness, from whose ferment at the hour ripe for wonderous workings came light. And light joining with the progenitor, Darkness, "forthwith touch'd/The whole enormous matter into life" (II, 196-7). The Heavens and the Earth were then manifest; mysteriously they united to bring forth the Titans, among whom Saturn was first born. Then the Titans found themselves ruling new and beautious realms.65

Having established the circumstances that brought the Titans to power, Oceanus proceeds to relate them to those that now lead to their fall:

> "On our heels a fresh perfection treads,
> "A power more strong in beauty, born of us
> "And fated to excel us, as we pass
> "Into glory that old Darkness: nor are we
> "Thereby more conquer'd, than by us the rule
> "Of shapeless Chaos . . .
> " . . . for 'tis eternal law
> "That first in beauty should be first in might:
> "Yea, by that law, another race may drive
> "Our conquerors to mourn as we do now."
> (II, 212-7; 229-31)

Thus, the fall of the Titans is not caused by their weakness alone but by the continuous process of evolution which decrees beauty as the ultimate reason for change of leadership.

For Oceanus, the perception of the undistorted truth about the rise and fall of the Titans entails the necessary beauty which lessens the tragedy of the fall. Since the Titans themselves did come to power through circumstances that were beyond their control, it is only fair that they be prepared for evolutionary changes that may dethrone them. Moreover, just as they were conscious of the various changes that took place as they came to power, so are they expected to have been able to predict their imminent fall from the changes that they beheld in the system of the world. It ought to have been clear to them that the eternal law which initially made them more beautiful than Chaos and Darkness is also capable of bringing into existence Apollo, who is more beautiful than Saturn, as a signal of a new era. Oceanus correctly argues that the Titans must be content in the knowledge that their successors are worthier than themselves and that they, the Titans, have successfully completed their task in the ever-changing and inevitable evolutionary process.[66] That this information given to the Titans by Oceanus is capable of giving them solace is further confirmed by Clymene who reluctantly admits that her senses were filled "with the new blissful golden melody" (II, 280).

Apollo's enthronement is symbolic of the power wielded by those who have the enormous knowledge that is inherent in beauty. Therefore, Apollo's reign is comparable to the poet's reign,[67] in the sense that the sovereignty or power of the poet is based on his ability to apprehend and create the essential beauty of all things and experiences. The god's intimate understanding of the nature of the world through an intense feeling of its apparently opposite circumstances has a direct counterpart in the experience of the poet portrayed in "The Fall of Hyperion." Moneta maintains that the poet is able to gain admission into the temple of Saturn because of his sincere concern about the plight of man. Moneta insists that "None can usurp this height/But those to whom the miseries of the world/Are miseries, and will not let them rest" (I, 146-9). Therefore, the moment the poet realizes that "Every sole man hath days of joy and pain" (I, 172), and that only a proper or an aesthetic response to joy and pain in this world is the key to unlocking the secret treasure-house of the essential beauty in the world, he attains a new life which consists of a mastery of life's contradictions--a life which he can communicate to others through the medium of art. Any poet who is able to attain sovereignty through his knowledge of the aesthetic ideal can be rightly addressed in the words of Moneta:

> "Thou has felt
> "What 'tis to die and live again before
> "Thy fated hour, that thou hast power to do so
> "Is thy safety; thou hast dated on thy doom."
> (I, 141-5)

The power of the poet depends on his intense experiencing of existence, which then yields the knowledge of beauty[68] that he communicates to his fellow men. He "rules" over others by giving them the balm that can make human life pleasant and worthwhile.

For Keats, the knowledge of beauty that confers sovereignty on the poet also entails the poet's acquisition of a strong and comprehensive moral sense that is useful in all attempts to solve problems in human life.[69] His strong belief in the usefulness of the profound moral sense gained from the aesthetic ideal of beauty informs his offering of "a poetical comfort"[70] to Bailey. Disgusted with the supposed villainy of the Bishop of Lincoln which prevented Bailey from procuring a curacy soon after concluding his studies in Oxford, Keats offers Bailey a consolation that is based on the Keatsian conception of the usefulness of the aesthetic ideal of beauty. He offers this consolation to Bailey in the form of a wish because of his awareness "of the inhuman dearth/Of noble natures" (Endymion, I, 8-9) in the world: "O for a recourse somewhat human . . . . of the Beautiful--the poetical in all things--O for a Remedy against such wrongs within the pale of the World!"[71] For Keats, if it were possible for all men to have an intimate knowledge "of the Beautiful--the poetical in all things," the world will be a better place for all, because justice and morality are native to the lives of all who have tasted the essential beauty in human existence. All men can learn to understand this source of harmony in life by appreciating the beauty in all immortal works of art. Since the beauty reflected in immortal works assumes a sense of comprehensive morality, the great works "Benefit . . . the 'Spirit and pulse' of good by their mere passive existence."[72] Thus, beauty in its aesthetic form is also morality or the "pulse of good" that serves all men.

For Keats, the aesthetic ideal of beauty is also the source of form and structure in all great works of art. His belief in beauty as the "formal cause" of all great artistic creations is partly discernible in his axioms of poetry. In the first axiom, he maintains that "Poetry should surprise by a fine excess and not by a Singularity--it should strike the Reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts, and appear almost a Remembrance."[73] The first part of this axiom sets up the "exuberance of things of beauty"[74] as a necessary condition for good poetry. Keats is not against the element of surprise in poetry. In fact, he believes that surprise is an organic part of poetic expression, insofar as the surprise is not based on "Singularity." The fine excess of things of beauty that can account for the necessary surprise in poetry may be partly considered to be a form of abundant sensuousness,[75] resulting from an aesthetic disposition of images and metaphors in poetry.

In the second part of the axiom, "fine excess" is firmly related to the framework which provides structural coherence for the ideas broached in poetry. Since this philosophical structure of a poem is, for Keats, based on the highest thoughts of man, it is reasonable to assume that Keats views the reader's highest thoughts as intimately true and beautiful. The profound thoughts may then be regarded as the basic knowledge of beauty. And since the great thoughts encountered in the reading of a poem "appear almost as a Remembrance," it follows that the reader and poet, inasmuch as they have intimate passionate experiences of life, perpetually share some profound thoughts about life--thoughts that are products of their perception of the beauty in all things. The reader and poet share the beauty and truth of existence that are depicted in poetry and art in general. Essentially, the manifold stylistic devices, and highest thoughts of men found in poetry reflect the beauty of the world and of man's existence.

The second axiom of poetry is really an amplification of the first. In it, Keats maintains that "the touches of beauty [in poetry] should never be half way thereby making the reader breathless instead of content: the rise, the progress, the setting of imagery should like the sun come natural to him--shine over him and set soberly . . . in magnificence, leaving him in the luxury of twilight."[76] Beauty in this axiom is specified as imagery because in Keats's view imagery incorporates elements of style and poetic ideas. Thus, Keats insists that imagery, a complex of style and ideas, must be skillfully made to elicit a feeling of contentment from the reader. For him, this feeling of contentment should result from the reader's response to the essential beauty that flows from a sense of wholeness in depiction. Wholeness is an integral part of beauty in Keats's cosmology; hence, "The excellence of art is its intensity, capable of making all disagreeables evaporate from being in close relationship with beauty and truth."[77]

Keats's belief in the aesthetic ideal of beauty underlies his approach to criticism too. Since he feels that "with a great poet the sense of beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all considerations,"[78] it is understandable why he insists that the major task of criticism is the revelation and assessment of the beauty in works of art. Speaking about his critical approach to his own works, Keats says that his "love of beauty in the abstract makes [him] a severe critic"[79] of his own writings. Since the beauty which he seeks in the abstract embraces all the ramifications of the aesthetic ideal already discussed in this chapter, it is also understandable why he sees himself as a severe critic of what he writes. For instance, he seeks to verify the truth of beauty in Hyperion when he asks Reynolds to "put X to the false beauty proceeding from art, and one // to the true voice of feeling."[80] False beauty is that which proceeds from mere skill or artifice, while true beauty proceeds from true feeling because it is organically related to the subject. Therefore, feeling is the true index of good "formal" beauty.

In conclusion, it is pertinent to remark once again that the Keatsian aesthetic ideal of beauty embraces virtually everything that the poet reveres in great or immortal works of art. Beauty is for him the focal point of all ideas and form in art. Since the reality of beauty is guaranteed by an intense feeling of life and its experiences, all great works of art are beauties to Keats. Hence, Keats's life-long aspiration was to add "a mite to the mass of beauty" already in existence as a means of ensuring his personal immortality.

CHAPTER V

THE USE OF ARTISTIC TECHNIQUES

1

Keats's notion of the aesthetic ideal, as has been demonstrated in the preceding chapter, broadly applies to both the theme and style of art or poetry. For Keats, the organic unity of content and form is the poetic ideal of truth-beauty or beauty-truth. In most instances, therefore, his considerations of aesthetic achievements as beauties necessarily entail thematic and formal excellence. For example, when he writes, "I ne'er found so many beauties in the sonnets [of Shakespeare]--they seem to be full of fine things said unintentionally--in the intensity of working out conceits,"[1] he is not only lauding the beauty of what Shakespeare depicts but also remarking the beauty of how the various subjects are depicted. Similarly, his declaration, "I look upon fine phrases as a lover,"[2] is not just a statement of his love for adroitness of verbal constructions but also an expression of his fascination with the harmonious blend of theme and style in the beauty of fine phrases. Evidently, Keats's concept of beauty which is the aesthetic ideal unites what Coleridge calls "the manner and matter of poetry."[3]

Nevertheless, although Keats conceives of art as a unified creative act, he is always conscious of the basic distinction between its form and its content. In a letter to Bailey he states, "Endymion will test chiefly my invention . . . by which I must make 4000 lines of one bare circumstance and fill them with poetry."[4] The "one bare circumstance" is the content or matter of the poem, while the "form or manner" is the style, "invention," or "filling the verses with poetry." Keats also distinguishes technique from subject matter in another letter to Shelley when he writes:

> I received a copy of Cenci, as of yourself from Hunt. There is only one part I am judge of; the Poetry, and dramatic effect, which to many spirits now a days is considered mammon. A modern work it is said must have purpose, which may be the God--an artist must serve Mammon--he must have "self concentration," selfishness perhaps. You I am sure will forgive me for sincerely remarking that you might curb your magnanimity and be more of an artist, and "load every rift" of your subject with ore. The thought of such discipline must fall like cold chains on you.[5]

The purpose, God, or subject matter of a poem is its content which to Keats is not the only valuable component of good art. For him, poetry, mammon, or artistry is also an important part of poems, and indeed the mark of an effective art. Nevertheless, both "God and Mammon" are inseparable parts of immortal works of art.

Apart from remarking the two inseparable elements of an artistic work, Keats's statement on his approach to the writing of Endymion and his comment on Shelley's Cenci also reveal his consciousness of the fact that the skill, craft or "artistry" needed in all attempts to capture the beauty of all things in art is consciously acquired or learned by the artist. Interestingly, this element of art is called "poetry" by Keats in both statements. He talks about filling the framework of Endymion with "poetry" or of being a good judge of the "poetry" in Shelley's Cenci. In fact, he regards Shakespeare's "intensity of working out conceits"[6] as a deliberate creation of the "poetry" of his sonnets. This "poetry" which Keats views as resulting from an artist's conscious creative act is the concern of this chapter. Since Chapter IV concentrated on Keats's conception of the thematic element of the aesthetic ideal, this chapter will discuss his view of the use of the "technical" component of the ideal--a component which Keats calls "poetry" or "touches of beauty."[7] And since Keats believes that the "formal beauty" of art depends on the masterful use of the artistic medium, his concern for technique in the writing of poems centres around the effective use of language. Little wonder then that he advocates a mastery of the diction, idiom, syntactic and sound patterns of whatever language a poet uses. He believes that such a mastery is necessary in the task of making language poetically embody the essential beauty of all things in art or poetry. Furthermore, he maintains that all conventions relating to the poetic use of language must be tested on the individual poet's pulses as a means of guaranteeing their suitability to specific subjects.

Keats's recognition of the importance of artistry to the effective realization of the aesthetic ideal in art informs his view of artistic creativity. Although he rarely discusses technical form or style in detail, his main interest centres around the ways various artistic techniques contribute to the total impact a work of art makes on its audience, for he believes that the greatness of art largely depends on its effect. Therefore, in assessing West's "Death on the Pale Horse," he states, "It is a wonderful picture . . . but there is nothing to be intense upon, no woman one feels mad to kiss, no face swelling into reality."[8] He disagrees with many of his contemporaries on the value of West's picture because of his conviction that the "stylistic or formal perfections" of the painting are unable to arouse intense feelings in the beholder. Thus, for him, formal perfections are means to effect not ends in themselves.

He maintains that "The excellence of every art is its intensity, capable of making all disagreeables evaporate by being in close relationship with beauty and truth."[9] Comparing "Death on the Pale Horse" with King Lear, he states, "Examine King Lear and you will find [this aesthetic intensity] exemplified throughout: but in West's picture we have unpleasantness without any momentous depth of speculation excited in which to bury its repulsiveness."[10] For Keats, the skillful bringing of "unpleasantness" into harmonious relationship with beauty and truth is the hallmark of great art. Thus, King Lear is for him a great work of art, since its formal and thematic components are organized in such a way as to elicit from the reader an appropriate aesthetic response--a state of emotional excitement coupled with a form of aesthetic speculation in which any possible discord is buried. Conversely, West's "Death on the Pale Horse" is for him a mediocre work of art in which the artist has been unsuccessful in intensely relating its repulsive elements to truth and beauty. The defect in West's picture is thus traceable to what Mukařovský refers to as the artist's inability to make unpleasantness "the means of heightening the aesthetic pleasure" or the intensity of art.[11] This poetic intensity that indicates the greatness of art is what Keats himself graphically illustrates in his sonnet titled "On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again"--a sonnet in which he views his tasting of "The bitter-sweet of this Shakespearean fruit" as consuming him in a fire which will ultimately give him "new Phoenix wings to fly at [his] desire" (9-14).

Essentially, Keats maintains that artistic works are more dependent on the skillful and organic arrangement of the materials constituting the medium of art than on the mere statement of theme or subject matter for eliciting the aesthetic response from the reader or beholder. For instance, he examines individual verses and scenes in King Lear, not necessarily as a means of revealing the formal components of the play, but as a means of discovering how the scenes and verses contribute to the total effect of the work. Hence his comment on Act I, Scene i, 291f. highlights the effect which Shakespeare achieves by an indirect revelation of King Lear's character:

> How finely the brief of Lear's character is sketched in this conference--from this point does Shakespeare spur him out to the mighty grapple--"the seeded pride that hath to this maturity blowne up"--Shakespeare doth scatter abroad the winds of Passion, where the germs like bouyant root in stormy Air, suck lightning sap, and become voiced dragons--self-will and pride and wrath are taken in rebound by his giant hand and mounted to the clouds--there to remain and thunder.12

By subtly giving a hint of Lear's pride through metaphoric comparisons, Shakespeare successfully creates the aesthetic effect of intensity of portrayal. Similarly, Keats's appreciation of the Elgin Marbles recorded in "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles"--while it emphasizes his feeling of "dizzy pain" (11)--also reveals how the beauty of the marbles "mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude/Waste of old Time--with a billowy main--/A sun--a shadow of magnitude" (12-14). The grandeur and magnitude of the marbles are qualities that the sculptor captures through skill and discipline.

Even when he discusses conventional devices of poetic language like simile and imagery, Keats emphasizes their usefulness or contribution to the aesthetic ideal. He does not see imagery as a merely decorative device. Rather, he views imagery as a means to poetic meaning or effect. For example, his disagreement with critics who suggest that the proper rendering of Act I, Scene i, 39 of Troilus and Cressida ought to be "I have (as when the Sunne doth light a storm)," instead of "I have (as when the Sunne doth light a-scorne)," is based on the effect produced. He argues that the commentators "have contrived to twist many beautiful passages into commonplaces . . . thereby destroying the depth of simile intended in the verse--taking away all the surrounding atmosphere of Imagery and leaving a bare and unapt picture."[13] He contends that the surrounding atmosphere of a simile, which is provided by imagery, is an essential part of the meaning of any simile. Thus imagery, for Keats, does not merely create a decorative background but contributes subtle shades of meaning to poetic expressiveness.

Keats also discusses Milton's metaphoric use of the word vale, in "To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?" (Paradise Lost, I, 321), in terms of the way imagery intensifies the meaning of the word:

> There is a cool pleasure in the very sound vale. The english word is the happiest chance. Milton has put vales in heaven and hell with the utter

> affectation and yearning of a great Poet. It is a sort of delphic Abstraction--a beautiful thing made more beautiful by being put in a Mist. The next mention of vale is one of the most pathetic in the whole range of poetry.
>
> "Others, more mild,
> Retreated in a silent Valley & c."(II, 546-7)
>
> How much of charm is in the Valley![14]

For Keats, the use of valley or vale is appropriate and effective because of the various significations it assumes by being part of a broad poetic context. Even the sound of vale, by blending with the poetic atmosphere, heightens its effectiveness. The entire aesthetic milieu of imagery converts the word into a kind of delphic abstraction which, in conjunction with the Miltonic vision, creates a sense of wholeness. Therefore, if the image of valley is separated from its poetic context, as Keats feels that the Shakespearean commentators have done in separating "a-scorne" from its aesthetic context, the poetic effect is destroyed.

Since Keats believes that specific devices (or "touches of beauty" like simile, metaphor and imagery) enhance the capability of artistic works for eliciting passionate responses from the reader, they can be rightly regarded as invaluable components of poetry, However, "the touches of beauty should never be half way making the reader breathless rather than content: the rise, the progress, the setting of imagery should like the sun come natural to him and set soberly although in the luxury of twilight."[15] The relevance of imagery and other touches of beauty is, for the poet, measurable by both the manner in which they awaken the sensibilities of the reader and the nature of feelings roused. Hence, only an imaginative use of artistic techniques can produce a response that makes the reader content in a state of excitement or emotional fervour.

Keats believes that poetic techniques which enable a poet to produce works that make the reader content in a state of emotional excitement normally evolve from intense conceptions and depictions of various subjects. He is, therefore, averse to any rigid adherence to rules or conventions of creativity. He declares, "The Genius of Poetry must work out its own salvation in a man: It cannot be matured by law or precept, but by sensation and watchfulness on itself. That which is creative must create itself."[16] For him, a direct involvement in the creative process yields the proper techniques that serve the poetic needs of individual artists. And basically, a direct experience of creativity also entails the poet's intimate participation in the particular circumstances of the existence of his subjects. However, if a poet wishes to adopt conventional forms and devices in his works, he must first test them on his pulses before they can become personally real to him. Essentially, Keats suggests that all creative conventions should undergo a process of personal validation to be useful to the individual poet.

Keats insists upon the process of personal validation of poetic conventions because of his conviction that such laws as are untested upon the individual's pulses detract from the genuine nature of the poetic genius and the significance of its products, either by restricting the genius's activities or by replacing creativity with mere artifice. He regards most works originating from a strict reliance on conventions as factitious and incapable of evoking the reader's intense reactions. Therefore, reacting against what he considers to be the artifice and dearth of sensation in the rigid Augustan approach to art, Keats writes,

> . . . beauty was awake!
> Why were you not awake? But you were dead
> To things ye knew not of,--were closely wed
> To musty laws lined out with wretched rule
> And compass vile: so that you taught a school
> Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and fit,
> Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,
> Their verses tallied. Easy was the task:
> And a thousand handicraftsmen wore the mask
> Of Poesy. ("Sleep and Poetry," 192-201)

Since what Keats sees as the dogmatic Augustan reliance on artistry usually deadens the poetic sensibility by making artists insensitive to the beauty in their subjects, it follows, for him, that those who write poetry on the basis of their technical skills alone are mere handicraftsmen and not real poets. Works that are products of this rigid adherence to laws then do not offer individual poets the desired opportunity to discover the devices which are appropriate to the depiction of their subjects. Therefore, Keats reiterates that artistry or creative laws must be seen as means and not ends in the creation of great poetic works.

Just as an inflexible use of artistic devices may prevent a poet from discovering the natural form required for the effective portrayal of a particular poetic experience, so also does an unimaginative use of facts or ideas impede the evolution of a particular form or style from the poet's involvement in the existence of his subject. Keats says that poetry in some Shakespearean history plays seems compromised by "particular facts. The poetry is for the most part manacled with the chain of facts, and cannot get free from the prison house of history, nor often move without our being disturbed with the clanking of its fetters."[17] He also suggests that the poetry of Milton's works is sometimes manacled with the chain of religious beliefs,[18] and Shelley's with ideas of magnanimity.[19] Although he accepts the need for poetry to minister at times to the religious yearnings of people in Milton's own era, Keats nevertheless insists that Milton's "exquisite passion for what is properly in the sense of ease and pleasure, [is the real source] of the finest parts of Paradise Lost."[20] Similarly, despite his sympathy for Shelley's need to make poetry a vehicle for moral proclamations, Keats objects to the apparent subordination of poetry to ethics or substitution of "God" for "Mammon" which he remarks in Shelley's Cenci. He demands that Shelley "curb [his] magnanimity, and be more of an artist, and load every rift of [his] subject with ore."[21]

Keats believes, then, that "Poetry must be free" from all chains just as "The poetry of Shakespeare is generally free as the wind."[22] He advocates poetry that originates from the soul or the genuine emotions of the poet because, for him, if the poetic genius is given a reasonable measure of freedom, it can discover the organic forms and devices that are relevant to the depiction of its subjects. His idea of organic form is in consonance with Coleridge's conception which emerges from the differentiation between organic and mechanical forms: "The form is mechanical, when on any given material we impress a predetermined form not necessarily arising out of the properties of the material,--as when to a mass of wet clay we give whatever shape we wish it to retain when hardened. The organic form, on the other hand, is innate; as it shapes, as it develops itself with the perfection of its outward form. Such as the life is, such is the form."[23] Poets must seek this organic form for their subjects and not rely on rigid or mechanical forms.

For Keats, a rigid or an unimaginative use of facts, by restricting the activity of the poetic genius, not only prevents the poet from discovering the organic form of his subject but also destroys the romance or mystery that is an integral part of poetic appeal. In Lamia, he graphically illustrates how naked truths can ruin the charm of art by imposing stylistic strictures on the poet:

> There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:
> We know her woof, her texture; she is given
> In the dull catalogue of things.
> Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
> Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
> Empty the haunted air and gnomed mine--
> Unweave the rainbow. (II, 231-7)

Reaffirming his conviction that the inherent charm of art is often destroyed by undue faithfulness to scientific certainties, Keats says "That the goblin is driven from the heath, and the rainbow is robbed of its mystery"[24] by hard facts. He therefore suggests an aesthetic approach to experience in which the ultimate premium is placed on beauty. Since his conception of beauty unites profound visions, organic forms, and a desirable element of mysterious charm, he is able to declare that "with a great poet the sense of beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all considerations."[25] For him, "uncertainties, mysteries and doubts"[26] about the scientific facts of subjects rarely hinder their effective portrayal. In fact, he maintains that uncertainties as to the verifiable attributes of a subject can sometimes give the poet the desirable measure of imaginative freedom and enhance his chances of discovering the poetic qualities of the subject and evolving the forms that best reveal its true beauty.

Basically, the subordination of technique to aesthetic effect, and the preference for organic form that naturally evolves from the poet's passionate apprehension of his subject, may be viewed as Keats's characteristic reactions against any tendency to regard artifice as the goal of art. And yet, he is aware of the merit of craftsmanship in all attempts to create great works of art. His consciousness of the vital role of technique in art is discernible in his assertion that "The excellence of every art is in its intensity, capable of making all disagreeables evaporate by being in close relationship with beauty and truth."[27] He is aware that the intensity which is capable of eliminating disagreeables by establishing a close relationship with truth and beauty entails some measure of skill. His constant struggle to evolve proper devices by experimenting with language and "a wide range and variety of style"[28] reveals a serious attempt to master technique. Indeed, his experiments with the romance, the lyric, epic, and dramatic forms of poetry are, as Matthey points out, "attempts at reaching the perfection his critical mind could perceive."[29] And his love of fine phrases--"I look upon fine phrases as a lover,"[30] he states--combines a love for the musical effects of language with a profound interest in the manner in which imagery, phrases, and groups of words combine in the expression of aesthetic meaning.

2

In many ways, Keats's desire to capture in art the "intensity inherent in the living beauty"[31] of all things and experiences accounts for his exploration of the nature of language. Since language is the medium of poetry, he examines its qualities--diction, sound and syntactic patterns especially--and how they can be effectively utilized for the purpose of achieving aesthetic intensity. His investigation of language, though informal, accounts for his conviction that poetry derives its appeal from an intensive exploitation of the potentialities of the "native idiom"[32] of the particular language in which it is written. And yet, he neither gives a theoretical definition of what the native idiom of a language is, nor approves of what Mukařovský refers to as a "norm of standard literary language"[33] as the real language of poetic creativity. Furthermore, he does not establish a personal linguistic norm of poetry as Wordsworth does when he insists upon "a selection of language really used by men"[34] as the appropriate medium for poetic art. Nevertheless, what Keats means by the native idiom of a language is partly discernible in what he commends in Chatterton's use of the English language. He declares, "Chatterton is the purest writer in the English language. He has no French idiom or participles like Chaucer--'tis genuine English idiom in English words."[35] He also praises the native music of the English words used by Chatterton. Thus, the use of characteristic English words that are free from foreign inflections coupled with the use of English sound patterns constitute Keats's notion of the native idiom of English which he recommends to all those who write poems in English.

Keats's recommendation of the specific or peculiar idiom of languages as the standard medium of poetic expression is not just a product of an informal exploration of the use of English. He also studied French and Italian,[36] so it seems that he had a good understanding of the peculiarities of three languages, and that these languages provided him with a comparative basis for arriving at his conclusion that all languages should be kept "pure." Thus, his love of French and Italian notwithstanding, he avows, "I shall never become attach'd to a foreign idiom so as to put it in my writings. English ought to be kept up."[37] There is obviously some element of patriotism in his advocacy of the purity of English but there is also an element of his sincere belief that the measure of aesthetic intensity which an artist can achieve is dependent on how well his style conforms to the distinctive characteristics of the language that forms the medium of his poetic expression.

His interest in Milton's use of English, and even imitation of the Miltonic style, heightens his consciousness of what he considers to be obvious corruptions of the English language by a foreign idiom. He writes, "The Paradise Lost though a fine thing in itself is a corruption of our language--it should be kept as it is, unique--a curiosity--a beautiful Curiosity. The most remarkable Production of the world. A northern dialect accomodating itself to greek and latin inversions."[38] But he is definitely not unreceptive to Milton's achievements. In fact, he regards Paradise Lost as unique, remarkable, grand and beautiful. He is particularly impressed by the effects Milton creates by means of "deviations in exceptional cases from the normal idiom."[39] Had the Miltonic effects--"Miltonic storms, and more Miltonic tenderness,"[40] created through these deviations--been aesthetically ineffective for Keats, there ought not have been any need for him to emulate the Miltonic example in Hyperion.

Nevertheless, Keats views Miltonic inversions as alien to the native idiom of English, and tantamount to a distortion of the natural sound patterns and music of the language. His dissatisfaction with the melodic patterns in Milton's style is partly emphasized by his preference for the "native music of Chatterton."[41] He cites the strictures imposed upon his genius by Miltonic deviations from the norm as the main reason for giving up the writing of

Hyperion: "I have given up Hyperion--there are too many Miltonic inversions in it--Miltonic verse cannot be written but in an artful manner or rather an artist's humour."[42] For him, the inherent artificiality of the Miltonic style detracts from the merit of Hyperion by forcing the poet to luxuriate in false or forced beauties. He asks Reynolds to "pick out some of the lines from Hyperion and put X to the false beauty proceeding from art, and one // to the true voice of feeling"[43] so that he can identify and possibly avoid unnatural beauties that often result from the artifice inherent in the Miltonic style.

It is important to note that Keats's experimentations with the English language spring from his unusual interest in the expressiveness of language--an interest which is evident in his experiments with language in the early works. It is not a direct result of his realization of the flaws in Miltonic verse. In a sense, all his experiments with the English language, evident in most of his poems, are aimed at the attainment of that poetic excellence which is capable of capturing the poet's vision and of eliciting from the reader an intense response. His apparent "failures" in the early poems are therefore not so much a result of his lack of "a theory" of the distinctive linguistic qualities that enable a poet to depict his experiences effectively in art, but owing to his somewhat limited creative skills or competence. He always sincerely seeks to use the English language to create the desired aesthetic effects in his poems.

Despite the fact that Keats's linguistic experiments in some of the early poems are sometimes marred by eccentricities and improprieties of diction, a predilection for excessive sensuousness, and apparent laxness of versification, it is obvious that the experiments in the early works led to his achievements in the later ones. Therefore, even though John Croker's attack on Keats in _The Quarterly Review_ identifies some of the common flaws in the language of the early poems, the effects that the poet strives for in these poems are unmistakable. Croker expresses his dissatisfaction with Keats's verbalization of nouns in "turtles _passion_ their voices" and "an arbour was _nested_," identifies quaintly formed nouns like "man-slugs and human _serpentry_" and the "_honey-feel_ of bliss," condemns what he terms an unnatural method of forming verbs as in "the wine _up-sparkled_" and "the multitude _up-followed_," and disapproves of the separation of adjectives and adverbs from their parent stock like in "whispers _pantingly_" and in "_hushing_ signs."[44]

There is no doubt that some of these neologisms and coinages enumerated by John Croker are deviations from the norm of standard literary usage of the English language in the Romantic period. Neither is there doubt that they sometimes detract from the effectiveness of passages in

Endymion and other poems, especially when they are quoted out of context. However, when these supposedly outrageous deviations are considered within the poems in which they occur, they can be seen as results of the poet's systematic attempt to exploit the distinctive characteristics of the English language for the purpose of expressing the complexity and intensity of human experiences in art. Keats neither regards his experiments with the language as unusual nor views his coinages as deviations from the native idiom of the language. He sees his coinages as natural products of the linguistic qualities of English--products that are similar to those that he finds in poets that he loves. In fact, W. T. Arnold convincingly demonstrates that many of the supposed peculiarities in Keats's diction are not uncommon in the works of Spenser, Shakespeare and Chatterton.[45] And, after relating "the greater number of the eccentricities of Keats's diction to their sources," Arnold concludes that "the purely personal and arbitrary elements of Keats's diction turn out to be less than usually supposed."[46] Therefore, the seeming eccentricities in Keats's diction and the often noted deviant usages are more in consonance with the natural than the unnatural idiom of English. And in using them, Keats seeks to achieve the intensity of portrayal that is capable of eliciting the aesthetic emotion from readers.

Keats's unceasing interest in actualizing the expressive potentials of the English language accounts for what Spurgeon calls Keats's "close, acute attention to word and phrase."[47] This Keatsian sensitivity to the expressiveness of language is everywhere evident in the poems. For instance, Keats's use of the abstract forms of some nouns that are sometimes coined instead of their normal or concrete forms helps him to redeem some of his passages from sheer sentimentality, since they serve as the means for objectifying his sensations and extending the import of his depictions. This is evident in Keats's use of "dewiness" instead of "dew" in the following extract from "I Stood Tip-toe":

> Ye ardent marigolds!
> Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,
> For great Apollo bids
> That in these days your praises should be sung
> On many harps, which he has lately strung;
> And when again your dewiness he kisses,
> Tell him, I have you in my world of blisses.
> (48-54)

Keats represents the drying of the morning dew from the marigolds with the image of the sun-god, Apollo, kissing the dew from the flowers. His use of "dewiness" instead of "dew" introduces an abstract element into the sun-god's activity, thereby moderating the sentimentality of "kiss." Furthermore, the abstract noun relates the concrete natural world to the abstract mythical and visionary one in which Apollo operates. Indeed, the idea of the relationship between art and life is brought into focus by this single abstract noun. Other examples of similar usages in "I Stood Tip-toe" are underscored in the following: "To where the hurrying *freshnesses* aye preach" (70), "Passing upon their yellow *flutterings*" (92), and "Let me for one moment her *breathing* list" (104). Although the value of each of these examples is not the same, it is clear that the "coined" abstract nouns check the sentimentality which the non-abstract forms may have made more obvious. More importantly, it is obvious that this stylistic deviation from the norm, like others in Keats's works, represents an attempt to achieve unique expressiveness. Thus, his stylistic "innovations" or realignments of conventions of English usage are pointers to his constant struggle to capture in art the distinctive texture of particular human experiences which the "normal" usage of the language may miss.

Keats also seeks to capture the intensity inherent in the beauty of all things and experiences by the use of words that combine emotion and sensation. Such words as "swooning," "panting," and "aching" are common in his works. In the early poems, the words often seem to reveal the poet's excessive emotion and sensibility, but in the later poems, such words combine emotion and sensation, and become more effective in depicting intense experiences:

> . . . as the sunset peeps into the wood

So saw he panting light. (Endymion, II, 382-3)

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense.... ("Ode to a Nightingale," I, 1-2)

For ever panting, for ever young.
 ("Ode on a Grecian Urn," III, 7)

. . . and with a pang
As hot as death is chill, with fierce convulse
Die into life. (Hyperion, III, 128-130)

And on a sudden, fainting with surprise.
 ("Ode to Psyche," 8)

The successful concentration of sensation and emotion, evident in these words, is a striking quality of Keats's great works. He also achieves the same effect by compounding words. There is often a fusion and concentration of meaning in such compounding of words. Sometimes the fusion of grammatical functions takes place --a fusion that Croker may have viewed as a deviation from the norm. In the "Ode on Indolence," for instance, compound words like "side-faced," "deep-disguised" and "fever-fit" are strikingly effective in the way they fuse the meanings of the words compounded. Other examples of such compounding of words are "Lethe-wards," "full-throated" and "deep-delved" in the "Ode to a Nightingale" and "spectre-thin" and "leaden-eyed" in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn."

The compounding of the meaning of words by Keats, as a means of capturing the intense beauty of his subjects, is not restricted to the joining of words with hyphens. At times, by modifying the spelling of a particular word, Keats coins a new word which combines the meaning of the unmodified word with that of another word or with the meanings of other words. A famous example is "purplue" which he coins from "purple": "I do not know whether to say purple or blue, so in the mixture of thought wrote purplue which may be an excellent name for a colour made up of those two."[48] A knowledge of the fact that Keats compounds the meanings of words through spelling variations is necessary to the resolution of some problems about his supposed use of strange or private words. For instance, drawing upon his knowledge of Keats's ability to bring the meanings of different words into conjunction through spelling changes, Christopher Ricks[49] is able to suggest a reasonable solution to what James sees as a problem of spelling and meaning in "the private Keatsian adjective 'sooth' which exists in his poetry alongside the public 'sooth' (meaning of course 'true') and appears to conflate 'smooth' and 'soothing.'"[50] Ricks maintains that "sooth," in Keats's works, usually signifies "the conjunction of the true, the smooth and the soothing" as is evident in "'O soothest sleep!' ('To Sleep,' 5) [being] acutely moving because it compacts the three."[51]

3

Keats's experiments with the language also entail a close examination of the manner in which the music or melody of words contributes to poetic meaning and effect. For him, verse derives important shades of meaning from the sound of words. He writes, "A melodious passage of poetry is full of pleasures both sensual and spiritual. The spiritual is felt when the very letters and points of charactered language show like the hieroglyphics of beauty; --the mysterious signs of immortal freemasonry! The sensual life of verse springs warm from the lips of Kean."[52] Kean's elocution releases both the sensual and spiritual essences of verse which seem to lie dormant in the written language of poetry. The oral or spoken characteristics of a language are in Keats's view very important to the poet. The proper organization of the sounds of words in themselves and within the poetic structure can produce musical effects that excite the reader's emotions. The excitement is, however, coupled with speculation because of the spiritual essence of verse. Thus, in some respects, poetry is the music of words or the creation of aesthetic effect by means of the combination, alternation or fusion of the different sounds of words.

Generally, Keats regards melody as the spiritual and sensuous essence of verse because it intensifies and sometimes creates aesthetic significance as it appeals directly to the reader's senses. He often calls poetry music or sound. For example, describing some of the natural conditions, and pleasures that usually inspire him to creativity, Keats states, "No sooner had I stepp'd into these pleasures/Than I began to think of rhymes and measures" ("Epistle to Charles Cowden Clarke," 97-8). He conceives of poetry here in terms of distinctive organizations of rhymes and measures--a conception which is fundamentally conventional but which is enriched by Keats in the sense that he considers "the musical measures" to be embodiments of his complex aesthetic ideal. For him, rhymes, measures or metres are organic components of a language which a sensitive poet can discover through a genuine or receptive approach to the music of words and constructions in the language of creativity. He therefore implicitly disagrees--as Coleridge explicitly does[53]--with Wordsworth's belief that metre is "superadded" to "a selection of language really spoken by men"[54] for its pleasure-heightening attribute. However, Keats agrees with Wordsworth's view that poetic music heightens aesthetic appeal--an idea which dates back to the time when Plato associated poetic rhythm with emotional effects.[55]

Keats's habitual equations of poetry with rhyme, measure or word music--conventional as they may seem--represent his belief that the melody of language can intensify and even embody poetic meaning. Thus, a poet's works can be called "rhyme," as in "Sylvian historian, who canst thus express/A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme" ("Ode on a Grecian Urn," I, 3-4), and in "I have been half in love with easeful Death/Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme" ("Ode to a Nightingale," VI, 2-3). Also, in "The Fall of Hyperion," Keats and Moneta call poetry, music. Moneta, addressing the poet, maintains that humanists "seek no wonder but the human face/No music but a happy noted voice--" (I, 163-4), while the poet suggests that "sure not all/Those melodies sung into the World's ear/Are useless" (I, 187-9). It is, therefore, proper that Keats calls upon his Muse to celebrate the birth of Apollo with music or melody:

> Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp,
> And not a wind of heaven but will breathe
> In soft warble from Dorian flute;
> For lo! 'tis for the Father of all verse.
> (Hyperion, III, 10-14)

The music from the harp and flute provides sensual and spiritual pleasures for the listener to enjoy on the occasion of the birth of the father of verse, Apollo.

It is pertinent to note, however, that the melody which Keats terms the essence of verse does not necessarily produce puerile pleasure for the reader. Since the poet stipulates that "sound must be unaccountably expressive of description" and meaning to be useful in poetry,[56] the kind of feeling generated in the reader is dependent on the nature of experience depicted. Keats maintains that any verse capable of generating intense feeling of pain or of pleasure--since intensity is the major element of aesthetic emotion--is melodious. Such verse could make the reader's eyes

> And ears act with that pleasant unison of sense
> Which marries sweet sound with the grace of form,
> And dolorous accent from tragic harp
> With large-limb'd visions.
> ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 142-6)

Keats's comment that "Kean's exclamation of 'blood, blood blood!' is direful and slaughterous to the deepest degree, the very words appear stained and gory,"[57] is largely based on the dolorous music of the verse. Despite the gory scene conjured up, and the unsettling sensations evoked by Kean's exclamation, Keats considers the verse to be tuneful. Another illustration of the poet's consideration of melody as an attribute of tuneful compositions--no matter what kind of sensations are generated in the listener--can be drawn from his reaction to music. In the "Epistle to Charles Cowden Clarke," Keats mentions the different sensations that he feels whenever he listens to various compositions: "my heart was warmed luxuriously by divine Mozart/By Arne delighted, and by Handel madden'd/Or by the song of Erin pierc'd and sadden'd" (109-111). Some of the tunes he listened to, produced pleasurable or even elevating sensations while others were unsettling. Nevertheless, all the feelings generated are alike in intensity and genuineness. Hence, for him, melodious verse is "Verse from which the soul would never wean" (108) because the feelings flow freely from the individual's soul and heart.

Pettet rightly suggests that the melody which "comes to perfection in the great poems of 1818 and 1819 was to a large extent spontaneous and subconsciously achieved."[58] But it is obvious that Keats also recognizes that the desired melody can be achieved mainly by means of a skillful management of the sounds of words. In a sense therefore, the melody of his works results from his conscious efforts to exploit the musical effects of the English language. In fact, Bailey avows that Keats actually propounded a theory of the organization of vowel music aimed at overcoming monotony in verse rhythm. He reports "that one of Keats's favourite topics of conversation was the principle of melody in verse, which he believes to consist in the adroit management of open and close vowels. He had a theory that vowels could be as skillfully combined and interchanged as differing notes in music, and that all sense of monotony was to be avoided except when expressive of special purpose."[59] Keats's comparison of the process of composing poems to that of making music reveals his awareness of the necessity of skill to the creation of melody. He is committed to rhythmic variations as a means of overcoming monotony. His suggestion that a masterful interchanging and combining of vowel sounds lead to complex and diverse musical patterns that match the complexity of the aesthetic emotion shows that he pays close attention to the creation of poetic beauty by means of a skillful management of the sound of words.

In spite of the validity of Keats's suggestion that a careful employment of the phonetic qualities of words can make verse less monotonous, there is still some critical uncertainty as to the precise meaning of "open and close vowels." This uncertainty makes it almost impossible to determine how Keats himself applied the theory in his works. Since Bailey does not specify what open and close vowels are, criticism can only operate on the basis of conjecture. Bate, for instance, accepts Professor Cabell Greet's suggestion that long vowels and diphthongs may have been what Bailey and Keats referred to as open vowels, while short vowels may have been close vowels to them.[60] The analysis of the poet's management of vowels which Bate builds on the Greet definition of open and close vowels is logical even though it does not rule out other possible definitions of the terms.

Seeking to establish patterns of vowel organization in Keats's works, Bate assigns the letters "a" to close vowels and "b" to open vowels. Although he succeeds in revealing many patterns of alternation of open and close vowels based on the Greet theory, it is possible to resolve all the patterns into two; the alternating and the combining of open and close vowels. Thus the two basic vowel patterns established by Bate are "bababa" as in "And purple stained mouth" ("Ode to a Nightingale") and "bbbbb/ababa" as in

"Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud" ("Ode on Melancholy"). Although the patterns which are based on the Greet definiton are consistent or logical, it is possible to define the terms differently and yet arrive at the same patterns established by Bate. For instance, close vowels may be defined as vowels that are entirely enclosed by consonants or consonant clusters, while those partially enclosed or not enclosed at all may be termed open vowels. Following Bate's example, the letter "a" may be assigned to open vowels and "b" to close vowels. Though this new definition is rather ingenuous, it can generate patterns similar to those established by Bate. For example, a vowel pattern of "ababababaaba" is discernible in "Far from the fiery moon and eve's one star" (*Hyperion*). The fact that the alternative meaning attributed to Bailey's terms reveals sound patterns that are similar to those established by Bate confirms the near impossibility of a uniform or an absolute definition of the terms. It follows, therefore, that without a generally accepted definition of the terms, it is impossible to ascertain how Keats applied the theory in his works. Moreover, it demonstrates that most dicussions of sound patterns and melody in poetry are, to a large extent, impressionistic and far from "absolute objectivity."

In spite of the difficulty in determining the exact meaning of open and close vowels, Keats's consideration of a careful management of vowel music as necessary to the creation of the aesthetic effect remains a valid proposition. Saintsbury recognizes that vowel music in Keats's poetry is a result of conscious poetic effort on the part of Keats when he maintains that "From Spenser and Shakespeare downwards, all great poets had used vowel music and no doubt consciously but its period of constant and deliberate employment, by poets in general, hardly dates farther back than Keats."[61] Yet, the Keatsian theory of vowel management is only a part of his general awareness of the invaluable role of melody and word music in poetry--an awareness which makes Keats's poetry, according to Pettet, "linger in the ear because of its resonance and beauty of word music."[62] Of course, the melody in Keats's poetry has long been remarked in criticism. His contemporaries either praised or condemned the musical effects of his verse, the Victorians revered the "fascinating felicity" and "natural beauty" of his poetry,[63] and modern critics recognize and praise his "sureness of ear."[64] Thus, the effect which Keats consciously strives for in his poetry--an effect that is somewhat related to what he admired in the "Spenserian vowels that elope with ease,/And float along like birds o'er summer seas" ("Epistle to Charles Cowden Clarke")--is evident to all who read his works.

Part of the "sustained melodic beauty"[65] of Keats's poetry is traceable to his mastery and effective use of traditionally recognizable devices--assonance, consonance and alliteration amongst others--for the structuring of the music of words in his poetry. Hence, in spite of the fact that he does not mention or discuss these conventional devices, it is true, for instance, that the device of assonance which the poet often employs influences his theory of vowel management. Since Keats feels that assonance or the repetition of the same vowel sound in verse may lead to monotony and therefore must "be avoided except when expressive of special purpose,"[62] it is important to remark that he exploits recurrent vowel sounds in the creation of poetic melody and poetic meaning as is evident in the following examples:

> Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
> Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn.
> (*Hyperion*, I, 1-2)
>
> He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
> ("The Grasshopper and the Cricket," 8)
>
> Bertha arose and read awhile.
> ("The Eve of St. Mark," 48)

The repetition of /ei/ and /e/ in the example from *Hyperion* produces a phonological echo that links the words in which the sounds occur through emphasis, while the unstressed /ə/ recurring in the extract from "The Eve of St. Mark," forms pause-like transitions to elements that are emphasized in the verse. On the other hand, the combination and alternation of dissimilar vowel sounds like the short /i/ and the long /iː/ in the verse from "The Grasshopper and the Cricket" and in "To visit a dolphin-cord in deep seas" ("To Homer," 4) alternate and relate the poetic effects of semantic and phonological intensification with that of phonological and semantic de-emphasizing.

The melodic excellence of Keats's poems is also partly due to consonant music or alliteration. At times, Keats uses an iteration of the same consonant sound to create chiming effects--effects that arise from the device which Empson refers to as the relation of "two words by similarity of sound so that you are made to think of their possible connections."[67] In "Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star" (*Hyperion*), the recurrent fricative /f/ links the words phonetically and suggests a fusion of meanings, while in "Of marble men and maiden overwrought" ("Ode to a Grecian Urn"), the bond created between the words by the iteration of the labial /m/ is phonological but not semantic. A complex fusion of the alliterative effects in the extract from *Hyperion* and that in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" is discernible in "Among the fragrant husks and berries crush'd/Upon the grass I struggled hard" ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 51-2) where the soft, liquid /r/ and the hard plosive /g/ complement each other even as they serve as counterpoints. At times, balance and contrast are alliteratively achieved in the same verse as in "The silent streets were crowded well" ("The Eve of St Mark") where the hissing sibilant /s/ sequence is balanced by, and contrasted with a sequence of /w/ sound.

The Keatsian melody is not necessarily achieved by the poet's use of alliteration and assonance as mutually exclusive devices. In fact, a sense of melodic balance is often attained by the collocation of assonance and alliteration in the same verse. In "After dark vapours have oppressed our plains," the vowel sequence of /a:/ is followed by the recurrence of the plosive /p/, while the repetition of the consonant /w/ precedes the vowel sound /ʌ/ which is sandwiched between consonants /w/ and /f/ in "With whispers hush and shuffling feet" ("The Eve of St. Mark," 21). The consonantal sequence of /w/ tends to blend, onomatopoeically, the hushed sound of whispering with that of gentle shuffling that the fricative effectively suggests. Not all the onomatopoeic effects are created by means of definable phonetic devices or techniques. For example, in spite of the different vowels and consonants in "Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways" ("Ode to a Nightingale"), the verse music imitates or parallels the rolling or flowing condition that is depicted. In fact, Keats often achieves impressive semantic effects with the music of his verse even when he does not employ conventionally recognizable devices. And as Pettet rightly points out, the "inclination to yawn" which is suggested by "Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep/Drows'd with the fume of poppies" is difficult to relate "to some fairly obvious phonetic cause."[68]

Keats's exploration of the means to the achievement of poetic melody is not restricted to either his theory of the ingenious control of vowel music or the use of assonance and alliteration. Vowel and consonant melody is for him inseparable from poetic rhythm. Just as he employs alliteration and assonance in the creation of specific effects, so also does he use verse rhythm, for the purpose of capturing particular moods through a conscious management of tempo. For example, he uses the accented "éd" as a means of slowing down the tempo and producing a meditative, lingering effect as in "globéd peonies," "warméd jewels" and "white ridgéd mountains," while in "Who keepeth clos'd wond'rous riddle book" and in ". . . saw beside the shrine/One minist'ring" the omission of the vowel increases the tempo.

It is important to reiterate at this point that many of these speculations on Keats's "theory" of poetic music are essentially hypothetical in nature, more so since there is no "standard" or "absolute" theory of poetic music in criticism. Nevertheless, the distinctively Keatsian mellifluence is also attributable to the poet's fairly systematic use of mono- and polysyllabic words. In "Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways," the polysyllabic words slow down the tempo, producing a slightly dreamy impression, while in "and make me sick/Of joy and grief"

(Hyperion, II, 288-9), the monosyllabic words produce a fast and rather crisp rhythmic motion. The effects associated with the use of both kinds of words may be combined to produce emphasis and contrast in the verse rhythm: "By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear" ("Ode to Psyche"). Sometimes, the effect produced by these kinds of words is reversed. The polysyllabic words accelerate the tempo, especially when used as contrasts to monosyllabic words having a considerable number of pauses between them, as in "Each family of rapturous hurried notes/That fell, one after one, yet all at once" (Hyperion, II, 282-3). He also uses the repetition of words or even verses to create a cumulative effect and variation of rhythm:

> No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet
>   From chain-swung censer teeming;
> No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
>   Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.
> ("Ode to Psyche," 32-5)

Lines 32 and 34 have the same rhythmic pattern and relatively slower tempo in comparison with lines 33 and 35 which have fewer pauses. The rhythmic movement in the quatrain is balanced by the recurrence of the same words and the same verse patterns.

Keats's interest in poetic rhythm necessarily entails his intimate examination of the organic adaptation of the sound of words to some traditional metres or patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables in verse. Since in the use of metrical forms Keats seeks "to anatomize the passion in every syllable,"[69] he does not rigidly stick to the metres he uses. He modifies them to suit the specific effects he seeks, making his metres organic vehicles of poetic meaning and effect. He experiments with various metres and poetic forms until they either fit his subject or he masters the ways of using them to create the beauty of his subjects. His experiments with the heroic couplet, which are evident in the early poems and the transitional *Endymion*, account for his relative mastery of the form in *Lamia*. He experiments with many other forms too, such as the ottava rima in *Isabella*, the Spenserian stanza in *The Eve of St. Agnes*, the ballad form in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," the sonnet form in many sonnets, and the blank verse in *Hyperion*.

In his experiments with these forms, Keats remains faithful to his tenet of testing all traditional forms on the pulses as a means of guaranteeing their appropriateness to the depiction of particular subjects. He therefore exploits the potentialities of each form for the purpose of achieving aesthetic meaning and effect, adapting the conventional metres to the moods or experiences he portrays. This adaptation of metre to mood can be illustrated from the silence and apparent stillness of the opening lines of *Hyperion* in which the effect is partly a product of a careful adaptation of metre to poetic meaning:

> Deep in the shady sadness of a vale

Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there.
(I, 1-7)

In spite of the fact that Keats uses the blank verse in Hyperion, only the seventh verse in this extract conforms strictly to the iambic metre. In the other verses, he punctuates the iambic with the trochaic to create rhythmic variety and avoid monotony. In lines 1 and 2, he even employs the spondee to achieve a lingering effect. This kind of metrical variation is evident in his use of other conventional forms.

Keats's experiments encompass the use of rhyme patterns and sound structures that often affect the melody and rhythm of his verse. He modifies many traditional rhyme patterns in his quest for euphony and organic sound structures. His modifications are evident in all his poems even though he does not discuss them in his letters. Yet, an index to the effects he seeks in the adaptation of conventional rhyme schemes to his peculiar needs is patent in his reference to the apparent incompatibility of the rhyme schemes of the traditional sonnet forms with the native music of the English language. His intimate understanding of the qualities of the sonnet form, derived from composing sonnets on the Petrarchan and Shakepearean models,[70] made him sensitive to the inherent limitations of the form. He writes, "I have been endeavouring to discover a better sonnet form. The legitimate does not suit the language over well from the pouncing rhymes--the other kind appears too elegaic--and the couplet at the end of it has seldom a pleasing effect."[71] His dissatisfaction with the legitimate or Petrarchan sonnet centres around the abbaabba rhyme pattern of the octave. The sandwiching of the spurious couplet of lines 4-5 between the true couplets of lines 2-3 and 6-7 of the Petrarchan octave produces an effect which to Keats is "pouncing." With regard to the Shakespearean sonnet, he maintains that the elegaic stave,[72] of abab in the quatrains, and the epigrammatic snappiness of the concluding couplet are unsatisfactory, and considers these limitations to be basically responsible for an apparent dissonance in the sonnet melody.

His experiments with the sonnet form are therefore aimed at eliminating the pouncing rhymes in the Petrarchan form, the elegaic stave and the snappy couplet of the Shakespearean model as a means of creating a new sonnet melody that is in consonance with the natural music of English. His quest for the ideal sonnet form takes him through circuitous paths in which he tries his hand at altering the Shakespearean and Petrarchan models in various ways.[73] His most radical modification of the form is in his use of blank verse for "What the Thrush Said." Nonetheless, it is in the sonnet "If by dull rhymes" that he makes a conscious effort to overcome the specific flaws he descries in the two traditional sonnet models. In "If by dull rhymes," he adopts a complex pattern of rhyme--abcabdca/bcefef--in which the Petrarchan pouncing rhymes and the Shakespearean elegaic stave, along with the concluding couplet, are eliminated. Assessing his success in this experiment, he states, "I do not pretend to have succeeded."[74] Whether he succeeded or not, the fact remains that his aim is to find "Sandals more interwoven and complete/To fit the naked feet of Poesy" (4-6)--an aim that is in keeping with his belief that poetry must be written with a keen ear for the native music of language. Indeed, this sonnet is thematically an extolling of the need to make rhyme an organic part of the natural melody of languages.

That he abandons the sonnet form after writing "If by dull rhyme" is common knowledge. However, in spite of the fact that his abandonment of the form may seem to suggest that he considers it to be somewhat unresponsive to his modifying efforts, his search for an appropriate verse form does not cease. He continues to seek "a stanza form which, while capable of that structural strength which comes from the correspondence of stanza with stanza, should yet avoid monotony, and should offer reasonable freedom of movement within the stanza."[75] Hence, in the "Ode to Psyche," he carries his search beyond the limits of the individual sonnet. The ode can be regarded as a string of loosely connected sonnets. From the rather loose and quaintly complex structure of the "Ode to Psyche," the poet's groping towards the ten-line verse structure and rhyme pattern of the six great odes is discernible. In comparison with the "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode on Melancholy" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the "Ode to Psyche" has longer stanzas, more metrical variations, greater diversity in stanzaic rhyme patterns, varying number of verses per stanza and even a greater number of shorter lines.[76] Furthermore, although it is a brilliant illustration of Keats's belief in the modification of traditional forms as a means of avoiding monotony, the "Ode to Psyche" is not structurally as successful as the other odes. At best, its success lies more in its lyricism than in its structural coherence.[77]

The ten-line stanza, characteristic of four of the great odes, consists of "a Shakespearean quatrain and a Petrarchan sestet."[78] Keats's reduction of the number of verses in the sonnet to ten eliminates the pouncing rhymes, the repetitive elegaic stave and the snappy concluding couplet from the new ode verse. The rhyme scheme of abab is adopted in the quatrians of all the odes. However, his desire to avoid boredom is noticeable in the use to which he puts the Petrarchan sestet. In fact, only the "Ode to a Nightingale" maintains a consistent rhyme pattern of cdecde in the sestet. The cdecde scheme serves as a working basis and is present in the first four stanzas of the "Ode on Indolence," the first two stanzas of the "Ode on Melancholy" and the third and fourth stanzas of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn." In the fifth stanza of the "Ode on Indolence," the last stanza of the "Ode on Melancholy," and the first and last stanzas of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," he adopts the cdedce scheme, while the sixth stanza of the "Ode on Indolence" and the second of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" have the cdeced scheme.

In "To Autumn," Keats even extends the limits of his newly evolved stanzaic form. While the three stanzas constituting the ode retain the Shakespearean quatrain form, the Petrarchan sestets are replaced by Keatsian septets. The septets of the ode have rhyme patterns of cdedcce in the first stanza and cdecdde in the second and third. The manner in which thought and rhythm is controlled in "To Autumn" demonstrates the flexibility of the form both in individual lines and within the stanza unit. Essentially, the structural coherence of five of the six great odes makes the new ode verse pattern an instrument, which to Keats, is capable of expressing his poetic visions in verse and of conforming to the requirements of the native music of the English language.

Keats's poetry, "at its most impressive height," is characterized by "suavity of diction and rhythm"[79] which, according to Pettet, makes his poems "rich, soft and mellifluous."[80] However, it is necessary to stress once again that Keats's interest in the music of words and verse is not an end in itself. He considers melody an organic part of poetic form or structure, and a contributory factor in his struggle to create poems that effectively embody the essential beauty of the world and human life. Therefore, the manner in which his verse melody contributes to his attempts at poetic visioning can be likened to his graphic description of the thematic role of music in Milton's Paradise Lost. He declares, "Heaven moves on like music throughout. Hell . . . also moves on like music, not grating and harsh, but like a grand accompaniment in the base of Heaven."[81] In consonance with this Keatsian declaration, it is correct to say that in "To Autumn," for instance, Autumn moves on like music throughout. The other annual seasons also move on like music, not grating and harsh, but like a great accompaniment in the world.

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Apart from sound and melody, imagery is also regarded by Keats as an important part, if not the most important element in the poetic immortalization of the essential beauty in things and experiences. Indeed, in his statement on the nature of "touches of beauty" in poetry, he specifically mentions the role of imagery--maintaining that "the rise, the progress and the setting of imagery should like the sun come natural to the reader and set soberly although in magnificence, leaving him in the luxury of twilight."[82] He holds the view that, for imagery to be able to arouse the aesthetic emotion of mature excitement in the reader, it must be natural or be an organic component of the poetic expression. The rise, the progress and the setting of imagery, by being as natural as the daily "movement" of the sun, represent how imagery organically structures meaning in a poem. Moreover, imagery is able to elicit the aesthetic emotion from the reader because it is also an embodiment of the poetic import. Thus, Keats conceives of imagery, not merely as a decorative poetic vesture but as a means to structural coherence, aesthetic meaning and effect in all great poems.

This Keatsian view of imagery does not admit of any separation of the "pictorial" from the conceptual structure of a poem. The conceptual and pictorial textures of a poem are inseparably fused into one by experiential images. Insofar as Keats conceives of images as complexes of the visual or sensuous and the mental elements of a poem, the rise, the progress and the setting of imagery is identical with the rise, progress and setting of conceptualization in great poems. The development of a poem, especially if it is along the lines of an aesthetic "argument" as is the case in the great odes, may therefore be considered (in the words of Ward) to be the unfolding of the "dialectics of imagery."[83] In the opening verse of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," for example, the image of a "still unravished bride of quietness" embodies the dual extremes of permanence and change which the poet intensely strives to grasp and perhaps reconcile in the ode. The representation of the urn, which is itself a concrete and visual image, by another pictorial image of an unravished bride creates a unique relationship between the subject (urn) and the analogue (bride) in which a conceptual tension between permanence and change is entailed. The undertone of the possible ravishment of the bride which is integral to the image introduces another conceptual tension between the present and the future. In fact, the ode is a working out of the implications of these conceptual tensions by means of other images that contribute to either side of the poetic argument even as they work for the fusion of the extremes into the aesthetic ideal of truth-beauty that is affirmed at the end of the poem.

Keats's intimate understanding of the structural and semantic functions of imagery in poems accounts for the high premium which he places on "the surrounding atmosphere of imagery."[84] He believes that the poetic contexts of images are basically responsible "for the creation of complete pictures"[85]--pictures that make the significance of images manifest. The image of the "unravished bride" is, for example, not complete without the modifications introduced by "still" and "quietness." However, he is aware that not all images can be compressed into a single verse. He advocates a careful determination of, and attention to, the environment of an image within a poem because he believes that no poetic image can be fully appreciated or its effectivenss assessed without a careful determination of what the poetic atmosphere adds to the image's value. Therefore, he disapproves of all critical attempts to dissociate images from their contexts.[86]

For Keats, imagery consists of imaginative bringing together of numerous and sometimes contradictory visual or sensuous and conceptual elements in aesthetic associations.[87] And, as has been indicated earlier, such associations may or may not be fully achieved within a single verse; hence, some images span many verses. When an image extends over a number of verses, it becomes imperative that the reader seeks its relevance and meaning from the larger poetic context created by all the verses that describe the image. Many striking Keatsian images are of this kind and require reference to their contexts to discover how they figuratively express meaning:

> When in mid-May the sickening East wind
> Shifts sudden to the south, the small warm rain
> Melts out frozen incense from all flowers,
> And fills the air with so much pleasant health
> That even the dying man forgets his shroud,--
> Even so the lofty sacrificial fire,
> Sending forth Maian incense, spreads around
> Forgetfulness of everything but bliss,
> And clouded all the altar with soft smoke:

> From whose white fragrant curtains thus I heard
> Language pronounced.
> ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 97-107)

The central image here is that of a poet by the side of an altar, but the state of mind of the poet which is directly affected by the enchanted surroundings is revealed through the larger poetic context. The milieu from which the complete image emerges is reminiscent of that often associated with the Miltonic or epic simile. Basically, the conversion of the "sickening East wind" to warm rain-producing South wind which releases flower fragrances into the air (97-100) is the analogue or vehicle that bears, by means of "the lofty sacrificial fire" (102), the subject matter or tenor of the blissful waftage of Maian incense; the fragrance of the incense fills the air as the enchanting voice is heard. Furthermore, the flower fragrances that make "even the dying man forget his shroud" (102) become the vehicle for the tenor of a poet, who overcome by the incense and voice, forgets "everything but bliss" (103). The enchanted environment elicits intense reactions or sublime passions from the poet--passions that make him forget everything in the intense blissful experience of essential beauty.

The poetic atmosphere does not always have this kind of metaphoric complexity within Keats's system. Sometimes Keats views it as the setting or background that gives specific definition to the object or forges its distinctive identity. He calls the poetic device by which an artist creates this background "stationing" or "statuary." Discussing Milton's mastery of this device, Keats writes,

> Milton is not content with the simple description, he must station,--thus here, we not only see how the Birds "with clang despised the ground," but we see them "under a cloud in prospect." So we see Adam "Fair indeed and tall-under a plantane"--and so we see Satan "disfigured--on the Assyrian Mount." This last with all its accompaniments, and in keeping in mind the Theory of Spirit's eyes and the simile of Gallilio, has a dramatic vastness and solemnity fit and worthy to hold one amazed in the midst of Paradise Lost.[88]

By creating a distinctive setting for the image through stationing, the poet is also able to reveal numerous associations upon which the reader's mind can speculate and upon which new images can be built. The Miltonic stationing of the disfigured Satan on the Assyrian mount provides Keats with a condition in which he descries dramatic expansiveness and sublimity. He tries to create backgrounds for his images whenever he thinks that such settings can contribute to the poetic meaning of the images. Hence, his recognition and use of this device are attributable to what Ridley sees as the poet's "dramatic instinct of setting the stage."[89]

Since the stationing device is capable of concentrating and extending the significance of a particular image, Keats employs it in most of his poems for intensifying poetic effect. In "I Stood Tip-toe," Keats demonstrates the relationshiop between poetic form and image--a poetic expression of the bond between art and life--by means of stationing when he states that "In the calm grandeur of a sober line/We see the waving of a mountain pine" (127-8). The verse and the mountain pine seem to fuse into a single visual image at the very moment when their distinctive attributes are vividly realized. A more obvious example of Keats's use of stationing can be drawn from the particular environment he creates for Lamia as she positions herself where she can best be seen by Lycius after her transformation from snake to an attractive woman:

> . . . There she stood
> About a young bird's flutter from a wood,
> Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,
> By a calm pool, wherein she passioned
> To see herself escaped from so sore ills,
> While her robes floated with the daffodils.
> (Lamia, I, 179-184)

Keats is not just satisfied to depict Lamia standing; he adds a limiting distance in the form of her relationship with a wood--"a young bird's flutter from a wood." Lamia is not just fair, her fairness blends into "a sloping green of mossy tread/By a clear pool." Her robes, in a gesture which is harmonious with her passions, "floated like daffodils." In fact, not only is Lamia stationed, but all the other images that make up the setting are defined in the process of depicting the harmony between Lamia and her environment.

In his comment on the Miltonic device of stationing, Keats also mentions "statuary" which, to him, is identical with stationing. However, a careful examination of his poems shows that statuary actually extends the meaning of stationing. In "The Fall of Hyperion," the poet compares statues of Thea and Moneta thus, "I mark'd the Goddess Thea in fair statuary/Surpassing wan Moneta by the head" (I, 136-7). Statuary connotes the sculptural qualities of figures in Keats's poetry--figures that are mostly modelled after those of Greek art. The clearly defined outlines and rather motionless qualities in Keats's verbal sculpturing of epic scenes and of figures like Saturn and Thea are unmistakable. Keats even describes Saturn and Thea in their despondence by relating them to sculptural figures:

> Just where her falling hair might be outspread
> A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.
> One moon, with alteration slow, had shed
> Her silver seasons four upon the night,
> And still these two were postured motionless
> Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern.
> (Hyperion, I, 81-6)

The motionlessness of Saturn and Thea, which is compared to that of sculptural figures in a cathedral cavern, is an example of what Ian Jack terms the typical Keatsian achievement in "verbal sculpture."[90] Keats himself is aware of the statuesque qualities of many scenes in Hyperion. He asks Haydon to await the completion of the poem before selecting a scene or figure for the illustration which he intends to paint. He states, "In Endymion . . . you may have bits of the deep and sentimental cast--the nature of Hyperion will lead me to treat it in a naked grecian

Manner."[91] Statuary is thus a technique that imitates what seems to Keats to be qualities of Grecian sculpture.

The use of stationing or statuary is distinctively Keatsian in the sense that the device admits of Keats's imaginative enrichments of his subjects. The images are no mere descriptions of statues; they partake of the sensuousness of Keats's imagination. In most cases, the figures and scenes that are portrayed by means of these techniques do not originate from specific statues. His imagination teems with epic and Grecian figures and scenes. He writes, "I feel more and more every day as my imagination strengthens that I do not live in this world alone but in a thousand different worlds. No sooner am I alone than shapes of epic greatness are stationed around me. According to my state of mind I am with Achilles shouting in the trenches, or with Theocritus in the vales of Sicily."[92] He, therefore, draws his materials from the shapes stationed around him in his imaginative life as well as from those in his normal existence. The passionate authenticity of his imaginative visions makes his epic figures richer.

Since Keats's imagery evolves from his passionate involvement in the existence of his subjects, his images are usually enriched by intimate experiences. His passionate experiences are responsible for the intense sensuousness which informs his imagery. As Finney rightly points out,

> The imagery of Keats's poetry has two notable qualities. In the first place, it is comprehensive, having images of all the sensory system--sensations of sight, touch, temperature, pressure, taste, smell, motor sensations, and internal sensations, hunger, thirst, lust, etc. In the second place, it is sensuous, being rich in the images of the intimately physical sensations of touch, temperature, pressure, taste, smell and other internal sensations.[93]

These senses contribute to the richness of Keats's imagery. For instance, the following passage describing the opening of the palace door of Hyperion illustrates how the senses are part of the image-creating process:

> . . . his palace door flew open
> In smoothest silence, save what solemn tubes
> Blown by serious Zephyrs, gave of sweet
> And wandering sounds, slow-breathed melodies
> In fragrance soft and coolness to the eye
> That inlet to severe magnificence
> Stood full blown, for the God to enter.
> (*Hyperion*, I, 205-212)

In order to appreciate this poetic scene fully, the senses of hearing, sight, motion, smell and touch must come into full play. Furthermore, new sensations of greater complexity are created by Keats's use of words that are conventionally associated with some senses for modifying other senses that are unrelated to them traditionally. For example, "smoothness" is a word that normally refers to the sense of touch, but in the quoted passage Keats relates it to the sense of hearing, "smoothest silence." Smell and touch are also associated in "fragrance soft," while touch and sight modify each other in "coolness to the eye."

In creating imagery that draws upon the entire sensory system, Keats often strives for the attainment of a unified sensation which is analogous to his idea of aesthetic intensity. He is aware of the basic process of the reaction of the human senses to stimuli--a process in which different senses receive impressions from a single stimulus at the same time, and then they resolve the impressions into a unified sensation or response. His recognition of the importance of this process in human experience and in poetic creativity can be illustrated from the following passages:

> Methought I heard some old man of the earth
> Bewailing earthly loss; nor could my eyes
> And ears act in unison of sense
> Which marries sweet sound with the grace of form,
> And dolorous accent from a tragic harp
> With large-limbed visions.
> ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 440-5)
>
> I heard, I look'd: two senses at once,
> So fine, so subtle, felt the tyranny
> Of that fierce threat and hard the task proposed.
> ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 118-120)

In the first passage, the activities of the senses of sight and audition are unresolved into a unified feeling, resulting in a dissociation inappropriate in the artistic task of uniting subject and form. The poet is unable to respond fully to Saturn's ineffective call to his fellow Titans to rise and fight to regain their lost kingdom because his eyes and ears are unable to act in unison.

Conversely, in the second passage depicting the poet's reaction to Moneta's injunction, the two senses act in unison. Moneta's threat is impressed upon the poet through sight and audition simultaneously. Yet, the impressions made on both senses are harmoniously resolved into a unified feeling by the poet.

Although the poet's unified response resulting from the resolution of the impressions on his two senses into one seems a commonplace experience, a closer examination of the second passage cited above reveals an interesting transference of the conventional activity of the sense of hearing to that of sight. This subtle transference is not overt because the reader can easily assume that the poet may have beheld the threatening gesture of Moneta as he heard the words of threat. But as the passage stands, the combined impressions of both senses seem to be resolved into that of seeing, converting the passage into a statement to the effect that the poet "heard, saw the threat." Such effects are common in Keats's imagery:

> Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths
> Of incense, breath'd aloft from sacred hills,
> Instead of sweets, his ample palate took
> Savour of poisonous brass and metal sick.
> (Hyperion, I, 186-9)

Hyperion tastes rather than smells incense. The transference of sense activity is accomplished by qualifying "wreaths of incense" with "spicy." The use of "wreaths" also suggests vision. Since in this passage, smell and sight are subordinated to gustation, a further intensification of taste is achieved by reference to Hyperion's "ample palate taking savour." "Poisonous brass and metal sick," add the sense of touch to the senses whose activities have been taken over by taste.

Other methods by which Keats draws upon the entire sensory system include a progression from one sense to a point where two or more senses eventually become united. For instance, describing how he saw the temple of Saturn guarded by Mnemosyne, the poet states, "My quick eyes ran on/From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault/Through bow'rs of fragrant and enwreathed light" ("The Fall of Hyperion," II, 53-4). The visual activity is reinforced and extended in "bow'rs of fragrant and enwreathed light" by the senses of smell and touch. Three senses are also brought into play in the poet's appeal to his Muse in *Isabella*--"O turn thee to the very tale/And *taste* the *music* of the *vision* pale" (II, 391-2). The senses of taste, hearing and sight or imaginative vision are brought into a relationship in which their distinctive qualities are brought into balance. The olfactory sense is reinforced by the tactile: " . . . we might/Be *incense-pillowed* every summer night" (*Endymion*, II, 998-9); "What *soft incense* hangs upon the boughs" ("Ode to a Nightingale"); and "the *moist scent* of flowers, and grass, and leaves" ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 404).[94]

CHAPTER VI

MYTH AND SYMBOL

1

That Keats views myth as an important instrument in poetic creativity is evident from the pervasive use of myth in his works. For him, myth is an invaluable source of symbolic language for expressing his conception of art, his notion of the nature and role of the artist, and his aesthetic vision of life. His works abound in classical allusions which he regards as organically related to the thematic and structural development of his poems. Specific poems like the odes to Apollo and Maia are addressed to mythical deities that are symbolically relevant to his view of art and life. Endymion and the Hyperion fragments are distinctive recreations of old myths--recreations that enable the poet to project his own "myth" of poetic existence.[1] "Sleep and Poetry" is fundamentally an enunciation of his poetic programme and principles by means of mythical symbolism. The great odes, in spite of the fact that only the "Ode to Psyche" is overtly centred on an old myth, draw upon classical myths as they contribute to Keats's mythical vision of the world. Even "To Autumn," the most naturalistic of the great odes, is conceived of in the vein of classical personification and derives much of its profundity from being a fascinating representation of how the seasonal changes in nature reflect those in man's life.

Basically, Keats's exposure to Greek mythology is traceable to "his reading Lempriere's Classical Dictionary, Tooke's Pantheon, Spence's Polymetis, Chapman's Homer,"[2] and "Elizabethan and seventeenth-century poetry, soaked like all Renaissance Literature in myths and allusions."[3] However, his sustained interest in, and distinctive use of classical mythology stem from the affinity of his mind or genius to the original Grecian spirit of myth-making, or what Clarke (his contemporary) refers to as "Keats's consanguinity with Greek mythology."[4] The interfusion of ideal and sensuous life, humanity and divinity, and imaginative and actual worlds in old myths fascinates Keats, more so, since it is in agreement with his aesthetic ideal of the unity of being in all true life.[5] His sincere desire is, therefore, to employ the universal spirit of myth-making in the poetic expression of his mythic vision of the world.

Keats conceives of myth as a form of art[6] that is analogous to Jung's "fantasy-thinking."[7] However, while Jung postulates a collective unconscious[8] as the fountainhead from which myths flow, Keats maintains that all great myths spring from the intense experiences and aspirations of individuals. Since ancient myths are products of man's intense experiencing of existence, Keats believes that they constitute "the very essence of our common humanity and living stuff of experience."[9] For Keats, "The real substratum of myths," like that of all great works of art, "is not a substratum of thought but of [the] feeling"[10] of the living beauty of the world.

As a form of art, myth is, in Keats's view, neither a visionary creation which "must actually be believed in" nor "a pretty irrelevant make-believe or idle fancy."[11] And yet, Keats implicitly questions the validity of the eighteenth-century belief that myths should not be taken seriously when he avers that "they are very shallow people who take everything literally."[12] He maintains that the eighteenth-century attitude to myth--which, according to Freund, results from the fact that myth "seemed to the philosopher a piece of folly, to the literary critic a serious breach of decorum, and to the moralist a giving of hostages to the priests"[13]--arises from a rather literal approach to myth. Hence, he considers myth to be "a verbal or pictorial expression of reality"[14] that must not be confused with, or substituted for reality, but must be seen as "a valid perception into reality."[15]

For Keats, the ultimate value of any great myth lies in its subtle relationship to life. Since he believes that myths cannot be literally true, he insists that they are figurative statements of profound truths about man and his world or effective symbols of the aesthetic ideal.[16] Myths are, for him, symbols in the Coleridgean sense, for Keats's idea of "symbol" is fundamentally in consonance with Coleridge's conviction that "a symbol is characterized above all by the transluscence of the eternal through the temporal."[17] However, insofar as Coleridge's notion of the "eternal" partly connotes the transcendental or that "which belongs to the world of absolute values,"[18] it is somewhat opposed to Keats's concept of the "eternal."[19] But both views of "eternity" share an element of the universal which makes the poets' notions of symbolism identical. Myth is thus, for Keats, "a temporal depiction" that symbolically reflects universal truths.

Keats believes that myth is not just "a fantasy-way of suggesting truth" but also an act of creating reality or truth because myth has a reality of its own.[20] For him, myth like any other good symbol "always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that unity of which it is representative."[21] Since myth draws upon and creates from the "Ethereal things" that constitute Keatsian reality,[22] it follows that myth simultaneously creates and represents reality. Moreover, the validity of myth lies jointly in its symbolic or anagogical function, its aesthetic truth, and the intensity of the myth-maker's experience.

Keats's understanding of the symbolic and aesthetic function of myth explains his deep insight into the true spirit of myth-making and accounts for his disapproval of the pseudo-classical tendency to use myths and allusions as mere ornaments in poetry. Like Wordsworth, he rejects the use of mythical allusions and "personifications of abstract ideas as merely mechanical devices of style,"[23] contending that they are poetically effective only when they organically contribute to the realization of the concerns of particular works. For him, allusions can potentially enhance poetic significance because they are usually based on mythical images and symbols that truly capture vital elements of human experience--images and symbols which, to modern psychologists, are archetypal representations of "archetypal patterns"[24] of man's "reactions to often-repeated crises, needs and longings in the long tale of human existence."[25] Hence, Keats holds the view that these recurrent symbols in old myths, when rightly employed, enhance the structural and thematic effectiveness of poems; after all, great poems depict and recreate important universal human experiences.

Convinced that archetypal images and symbols in old myths must be integrated into poems to make them aesthetically relevant, Keats always strives to make old myths integral to his immediate poetic concerns by recreating what he sees as their origins in man's passionate response to nature and life. Similarly, he constantly seeks an intimate imaginative experience of the original emotions that engendered those Greek myths that he feels are relevant to his vision of the world because, as he puts it, "We read fine things but do not feel them to the full until we have gone through the same steps as the Author."[26] Essentially then, he imaginatively correlates his reactions to life with those of ancient myth-makers in order to authenticate the old myths and establish a sound basis for the creation of his own myth of the poetic approach to human existence. Insofar as he is able to relive the events from which ancient myths sprang, Keats feels that he can integrate the myths into his poems and use them to enrich his own myth. Evert is, therefore, right in remarking that "Keats's mythography, except in some of his apprentice poetry, is not merely incidental, decorative, exotic or imitative"[27] but organic to his poetic and mythic view of the world.

Since Keats also believes that myth is "a form of ritual behaviour which does not find its fulfilment in the act but must proclaim and elaborate a poetic form of truth,"[28] he views ancient myths (or classical organizations of archetypal images and symbols into mythical unities) as distinctive creations of cosmological structures. Therefore, he draws upon these ancient "means of expressing complex reality"[29] (or means of indirectly creating metaphysical systems) in his poetic attempts "to resolve the large, unanswerable perplexities that afflict all men by constructing his own myth."[30] Van Ghent maintains that the Keatsian myth of the poetic approach to life "appears every where in Keats's poetry, now under one mode of realization, now under another."[31] Many other critics like Bate, Balslev and Perkins implicitly or explicitly mention elements of the Keatsian myth. Perkins, for instance, remarks that "In the great myth, in the *Letters*, of human life as 'a vale of Soul-making' there is a gradual forming of a human identity or 'Soul' by means of 'a World of Pains and troubles;' in *Hyperion*, there is a similar myth of the cosmos, progressively evolving forms, more complex, aware and beautiful."[32] In fact, Keats's speculations on Soul-making and the chambers of the human mind, in his letters, form the theoretical framework of the mythopoeic vision of the world that is discernible in all his poems.[33]

2

In most of his poems, Keats vitalizes classical myths and integrates them into his own myth. Even in the early poems--which some critics consider to be "the best examples of the poetry of luxuries, stimulating sensuous and erotic pleasure"[34]--Keats revivifies old myths and employs them in the projection of his own myth. "I Stood Tip-toe," for instance, which is an early poem that seems no more than a record of Keats's enjoyment of natural beauties, is in fact both a recreation of how Greek myths originate from man's imaginative response to natural phenomena and an enactment of the Keatsian process of myth-making. In the poem, Keats's sensuous enjoyment of nature is objectified and transformed into the native impulse engendering great myths by being related to the intense emotions underlying such old myths as Psyche, Pan and Endymion. Moreover, the concept of myth that emerges from the process of myth-making in "I Stood Tip-toe" demonstrates, what to Keats, is the similarity between the mythic and poetic processes. The myth-maker's progress from an intense participation in nature to the embodiment of the experience in myth parallels the poet's progress from a passionate involvement in life to its representation in poems. And, the symbolic and aesthetic relation of the world of myth to the actual one is the same as the subtle relation of art to life in the Keatsian system.[35] Thus, "I Stood Tip-toe" may be rightly regarded as a poetic statement on the origin, nature and significance of myth.

The process of myth-making spans three distinctive stages in "I Stood Tip-toe"--stages that correspond with the three chambers of the human mind in Keats's simile of human life and form the basis of Keats's mythopoeic vision of the world. The first stage (1-115) can be termed the stage of "Infancy" because it is concerned with the state of mind and kind of knowledge that Keats associates with the "infant and thoughtless Chamber of the human mind." The second stage (116-180) which draws upon the experiences of the chamber of Maiden-Thought, may be called the stage of Maiden-Experience. And the third stage (181-242) is the stage of Mature-Experience because its concerns are the same as those of the chamber of Mature-Thought. A systematic movement of an individual from the first through the second and to the third stage marks a progressive understanding of the nature and significance of myth--symbolizing man's progess towards a better understanding of the nature of life in Keats's system.

The first or Infant stage in the process of myth-making ("I Stood Tip-toe," 1-115) is represented by the individual's "unconscious" or "thoughtless" participation in the world of myth and in nature. Unaware of the difference between his life in the normal and in the mythical worlds, and between his "Identity" and that of flowers in nature and deities in myths, the individual lives in a state of Infant solidarity with all creatures. Hence, Keats portrays the "Infant-poet"[36] as a person whose consciousness of "self-hood" is yet unborn. The Infant-poet does not see himself as separate from his environment but as a natural part of it; he is one with the fields, woods, and skies (1-40). Human life is, to his Infant mind, hardly different from the existence of "sweet buds" (3) "clouds in the fields of heaven" (10) and deities in the "realm of Flora and old Pan" ("Sleep and Poetry," 101-2). Unconsciously experiencing a harmonious coalescence of myth and reality, and of art and life, the Infant-poet's idea of the world becomes that in which visionary and actual experiences are undifferentiated. And, having no sense of a distinctive Identity, he feels only "the fundamental solidarity of life that underlies the multiplicity of its forms."[37]

This stage of Infancy corresponds with the first chamber of the human mind, making the Infant-poet identical with the "Intelligence" in Keats's scheme of Spirit-creation.[38] Essentially, Keats's view of the Infant-poet's state of mind foreshadows the anthropological conception of the "primitive mind which is unaware of divisions between itself and external objects."[39] Moreover, this state of Infancy which is like the Blakean state of Innocence[40] has much in common with what modern psychologists associate with man in his "original state," or what they see as the psychological state "in man's pre-history when the individual and the group, ego and consciousness, man and the world, were indissolubly bound up with one another that the law of participation mystique, of unconscious identity prevailed between them."[41]

Keats often draws upon the characteristics of this "participation mystique"[42] that are identified in this stage of Infancy for making the artistic device of "personification" organic to poetic expression. Since human and non-human entities partake of undifferentiated existence in this stage, it is natural to characterize natural occurrences in terms of human experiences. For instance, in "a spring of clear water/Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters/The blue-bells" ("I Stood Tip-toe," 41-3), the relationship between the spring and the flowers is given in human terms--the blue-bells become the spring's daughters and the spring takes on the attributes of a proud mother. This personification of the spring and the flowers is "organic" since it springs from the poet's immediate involvement in the "feelings" of these inanimate elements; after all, the Infant-poet shares in the life-force that flows through all things.[43]

Keats believes that the Infant-poet's vision of the world emanates from the universal mythopoeic spirit (or the spirit from which all great myths flow) because Infant-poets partake of the harmony in all things. However, since they live in an "unconscious state," their embracing of the profound truths in myths is only a prelude to a better knowledge of these truths that is attainable in the final stage of myth-making. The second stage or the stage of Maiden-Experience ("I Stood Tip-toe," 116-180) marks the birth of the Maiden-poet which is possible because of the awakening of self-consciousness or what psychologists refer to as the beginning of individuation.[44] In this stage, the Infant-poet becomes a Maiden-poet because he now begins to perceive the distinctions between himself and his environment, between visionary and actual experiences, between art and life, and between the pleasant and unpleasant elements of art and life, and in nature. Since he can no longer live in a world where myth and reality are the same, he is forced to seek some explanations for the "participation mystique"[46] of the stage of Infancy. While he does not fully explain the phenomenon in this stage, the Maiden-poet is able to establish the imaginative and natural origins of myths from an examination and a recreation of the ancient myths of Psyche, Pan and Narcissus.

The recreation of the myths of Psyche and Pan in this stage of Maiden-Experience reveals how old myths originated from the interaction of a passionate poet with the heightened beauty of nature. Basically, the moon increased the enchantment of nature to a level where it elicited the myth-generating passion from the original creator of the myths. As a "Spangler of clouds, halo of crystal rivers and/Mingler with leaves and dew and tumbling stream" (118-9), the moon transformed nature into "a fair paradise" which inspired the ancient myth-maker, and which is still capable of inspiring poets today as it did of old (125-7). The enchantment of the heightened beauty of nature "charmed [the ancient myth-maker] away from all his troubles" and "uplifted him from this world" into the mythical one (137-140) where he witnessed the fulfilment of the love of Psyche for Cupid, and the agony of the unrequited love of Pan for Syrinx.

The Maiden-poet, having experienced the intense sensations that open "the realms of wonderment" for the myth-maker, proceeds to discover the imaginative process that enables a self-conscious but passionate man "to behold Dryads behind some trees."[47] The recreation of the myth of Narcissus helps the Maiden-poet to experience the nature of "the simple imaginative mind"[48] which can create myths from the interaction of man with nature: "What first inspired a bard of old to sing/Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring?" (163-4), he asks. "A meek forlorn flower" (122) on the bank of "a clear pool" (167), he answers. The lonely and love-sick flower--"drooping its beauty o'er watery clearness/To woo its own sad image into nearness" (173-4) in the midst of a beautiful setting--brought "some fainter gleamings o'er the poet's fancy/Nor was it long ere he had told the tale/Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's bale" (178-180). In other words, the loneliness of the flower affected the myth-maker deeply, and opened the door to the "realms of wonderment" (140) where the flower's plight is re-enacted as a form of human drama in which the personified Narcissus is the central character.

While the revivification of the old myth of Narcissus in "I Stood Tip-toe" sensitizes the Maiden-poet to the imaginative and natural source of myths, it also projects Keats's "theory" of the origin of myth in nature. In Endymion, for instance, Keats depicts the origin of the Endymion myth (I, 540-650)--an origin that is mainly the protagonist's imaginative reaction to the effect of the moon upon him. Endymion recounts the experience himself:

> Ah lo! from opening clouds, I saw
> The loveliest moon, that ever silver'd o'er
> A shell from Neptune's goblet: she did soar
> So passionately bright, my dazzled soul
> Commingling with her spheres did roll
> Through clear and cloudy, even when she went
> At last into a dark vapoury tent. (I, 591-597)

Endymion's soul is lost in the moon's spheres--a definite naturalistic rendering of the union of lovers. The moon which was a mere natural element at the beginning of Endymion's experience gradually takes on human qualities as Endymion's relation to her is transformed into a relationship with a loved one. Thus, the naturalistic basis for the personification of the moon is established. The moon becomes Cynthia (I, 601-609), Endymion's "commingling with the moon's spheres" assumes the status of the consummation of love between him and Cynthia, while the moon's retreat to "her dark vapoury tent" signals Endymion's loss of his lover.

This Keatsian "theory" of the origin of myth in nature is, in some respects, "a personal extension of the mode of mythological explanation then a commonplace"--an explanation which Hazlitt "summarizes in the first of his Lectures on the English Poets."[49] It is also partly derived from Keats's idiosyncratic reaction to Wordsworth's "theory" of the natural origin of ancient myths propounded in The Excursion (IV, 847-860).[50] In fact, Blackstone is correct in arguing that, because in The Excursion Wordsworth virtually refers to the ancient myth-makers as "'those bewildered Pagans of old times' who saw things that were not there," Wordsworth "deflowers what Keats sanctifies."[51] Thus, Wordsworth's supposedly "original insight" into the source of myth is a disguised ridicule of the stage of Infancy which Keats views in a more sympathetic manner by recognizing the truth of ancient myth-makers' imaginative experiences.[52] Like the Maiden-poet, Keats (conscious of the visionary origin of myths)[53] neither confuses myth with reality nor dismisses it as a senseless pagan make-believe. Rather, he regards myth as an indirect expression of truth by means of imaginative transformations of natural phenomena and human experiences into a form of art that dates back to antiquity. Unlike Keats's, however, the Maiden-poet's perception of the truth in myths is somewhat fragmented. Conscious of himself as a distinct entity that is separate from other entities, the Maiden-poet tends to consider man's pleasant and unpleasant experiences of life --experiences that are symbolically portrayed in the myths

--as mutually exclusive. Hence, for the Maiden-poet, the myths of Psyche and Pan respectively represent the bright and the dark effects of the chamber of Maiden-Thought, while the myth of Narcissus symbolizes the apparent inevitability of the poet's seclusion or loneliness in this world.

Keats is convinced that a poet's knowledge of the imaginative and natural source of myth can help him make mythical allusions or references organic components of poems. He stresses the need to make allusions bearers of the imprint of the origins of the myths from which they are drawn as a means of making them easy to blend into new poetic contexts in which they are needed. For him, the inclusion of the natural and imaginative origin of myths in allusions is identical with the provision of "the surrounding atmosphere of imagery"[54] that is vital to the realization of "complete poetic pictures."[55] Therefore, Keats insists that all allusions, no matter how brief they may be, must subsume the sources of the myths from which they are taken.

Keats constantly strives to place the classical allusions he employs in his poetry within contexts that suggest their original sources in ancient myths based on nature. While many of his allusions in the early poems may appear conventional, especially when they are cited out of context, it is evident that Keats's personal involvement in the native spirit of the original myths gives the allusions new lives and integrates them into their new poetic contexts. It is, therefore, difficult to agree fully with Sherwood's assertion that "In many references to Greek mythology in the early poems there is little that is noteworthy, [Keats] has caught the habit of allusions from the poets whom he loves, and in many cases does not swing free from allusions. The Muses and Graces, the buds of Flora's diadem, flush'd Aurora in the roseate dawning, chaste Diana in her bower . . . and similar expressions bear the stamp of pseudo-classical repetition of mythical names and are little inwrought with the meaning of the context."[56] Keats's use of references to classical myths in the following extract--an extract which contains most of the examples cited by Sherwood--shows how his personal involvement and the subsumed natural origin of the old myths contribute to poetic meaning:

> . . . fain would I follow thee
> Past each horizon of fine poesy;
> . . . .
> But 'tis impossible; far different cares
> Beckon me sternly from soft "Lydian airs,"
> And hold my faculties so long in thrall,
> That I am often in doubt whether at all
> I shall see Phoebus in the morning:
> Or flush'd Aurora in the roseate dawning!
> Or a white Naiad in the rippling stream;
> Or a rapt Seraph in a moonlight beam;
> Or again witness what with thee I've seen,
> The dew by fairy feet swept from the green,
> After a night of some quaint jubilee
> Which every elf and fay had come to see:
> When bright processions took their airy march
> Beneath the curved moon's triumphal arch.

("Epistle to George Felton Mathew," 11-12; 17-30)

Keats's personal involvement in the conditions depicted is unmistakable. To him, the horizons of fine poesy and "Lydian airs" are in the realm of myth, while the distracting immediate cares refer to his medical studies. The emergent relationship between his desire for the charms of the imaginative world and the commonplaces of ordinary life is that of conflict, an apparent conflict which the Maiden-poet feels intensely and which is suggestive of the recurrent theme of the seeming incompatibility between art and life in Keats's poems. Though the conflict between art and life is not fully explored in this passage, its significance, which is actually enhanced by the mythical references in this poem, matches that in later poems such as the "Ode to a Nightingale" and the "Ode on Melancholy." While in this epistle and in "O Solitude" the poet is troubled by the fear of the loss of the imaginative world, in the "Ode to a Nightingale" it is the loss of the ordinary world that bothers him. The struggle to create a harmonious relationship between the requirements of poetic transport and life's practicalities is as strong in this epistle as it is in the odes. Therefore, since the mythical allusions in this epistle, like those in the great odes, contribute to the exploration of the apparently conflicting aims of imaginative and actual experiences, they are thematically relevant.

Moreover, the classical allusions in this extract from the "Epistle to G. F. Mathew" contribute to the structural coherence of the poem. As is the case in most early poems, the references here bear the stamp of the poet's intimate understanding and sensitive use of the imaginative and natural origin of myths. He shows that a poet cannot "see Phoebus in the morning/Or flush'd Aurora in the roseate dawning" (21-2) until his spirit is able to soar above the mere physical aspects of nature. Keats carefully incorporates his knowledge of the genesis of the mythical visions into the allusions as a means of authenticating his own use of the old myths. Similarly, the natural origins of the old myths are indicated in most of the classical allusions. The white Naiad's existence is tied to the physical reality of a rippling stream (23), the Seraph is associated with the moonlight's beam (24), and Phoebus comes to life only with the coming of dawn.

The mythical visions informing most of the allusions Keats employs in his poems are concretized by the actual world and the poet's "artistically detached" attitude towards the imaginative experience. In fact, what is emphasized in this stage of Maiden-Experience is how the validity of the world of myth stems from the actual world and the poet's imagination. Since in Keats's view whatever the imagination siezes upon as beauty must be truth whether it existed before or not, the mythic world is made real by the imagination's perception of its beauty; the poet's claim in the "Epistle to G. F. Mathew" that Mathew and he had previously seen "the dew by fairy feet swept from the green,/After a night of quaint jubilee" (27-8) is thus true. In many other poems, Keats insists upon the truth and beauty of this kind of experience and craves for more of it.

Keats observes that the various natural conditions which gave rise to Greek myths are forever present to the imaginative persons who seek the myths that are "latent in the manifestation of nature, the legend-laden wind, the forest and the lake."[57] The validity of Keats's statement is implicit in his recreations of the imaginative and natural origin of myths in this stage of Maiden-Experience and in his reference to the continuing presence of myths in contemporary natural conditions. He maintains, for instance, that it is possible for a "modern" poet to hear the voice telling the Endymion myth if he is attentive to nature: "the strange voice is," however, "upon the wane" (Endymion, II, 849). In "I Stood Tip-toe," the myth-maker who first created the Endymion myth is said to have been inspired by the plight of Cynthia whose unreciprocated love for Endymion made her desolate (193-204), while in Endymion, the myth-maker, being a later generation poet, is supposed to have imbibed the myth from a lake:

> 'tis a ditty
> Not of these days, but long ago 'twas told
> By a cavern wind into a forest old;

> And then the forest told it in a dream
> To a sleeping lake, whose cool and level gleam
> A poet caught as he was journeying
> To Phoebus' shrine; and in it he did fling
> His weary limbs, bathing an hour's space,
> And after, straight in that inspired place
> He sang the story up into the air,
> Giving it universal freedom. (II, 729-739)

The version of the legend of Endymion, released by this later generation poet into the air, still echoes through nature for the attentive ear to catch. It is remarkable, however, that the different sources of inspiration for each of the two versions of the myth given in "I Stood Tip-toe" and in Endymion are essentially the same. The poetic vision engendering the myth in the minds of both poets is the same because it is the reflection of the image of the moon on the "sleeping lake" that reveals an image of Cynthia in desolation to the second poet--an image similar to that espied by the first poet who created the myth from the solitary existence of the moon in the blue sky.

The origin and continuity of myths in nature having been established in the stage of Maiden-Experience, Keats proceeds to a direct treatment or creation of myth in the stage of Mature-Experience ("I Stood Tip-toe," 181-242). He briefly relates the myth of Endymion without elaborating its natural origin[58] as a means of heralding the birth of a Mature-poet who is aware of the unity of being or "the principle of beauty in all things" that underlies all great myths. In this stage of Mature-Experience, the split between the Maiden-poet and his environment is mended as the Mature-poet imaginatively or symbolically revives the "participation mystique" that characterized the stage of Infancy. To illustrate the stage of Maiden-Experience and demonstrate the interrelation of all the stages in the process of myth-making, Keats draws upon the Endymion myth and characterizes the state of mind that is capable of producing myths from the enchantment of the natural world. The poet who first told the story of Endymion is said to have "surely burst our mortal bars" and gone "into some wond'rous region" in search of Endymion ("I Stood Tip-toe," 190-2). The result of the poet's search in the "invisible world" (186) is sung in the myth of Endymion, a song which Keats calls "the sweetest of all songs" because it blesses all those who hear it as it symbolically sheds light on the human condition.

In recreating the Endymion myth in this stage of Mature-Experience, Keats equates the mature myth-maker with the mature poet, and also states the symbolic fusion of the mythical and actual worlds. The poet, seeking admittance to the mysterious realm, is poised "upon Latmus' top" (194) like the one who stands "tip-toe upon a little hill" in the stage of Infancy. But the Mature-poet is a conscious and imaginative participant in the ritual of myth and not an "unconscious" or "innocent" person. Hence, the "breeze which fans him" is simultaneously a natural phenomenon and "a solemn, sweet and slow hymn from Dian's temple" (192-200). The moon, in her lonely existence in the sky, is not just a natural representative of Cynthia as was the case in the stage of Maiden-Experience but "actually" a desolate Cynthia. Being negatively capable and able to live in the visionary world, the Mature-poet no longer needs to establish the natural link between the actual and the mythical worlds to make his visions authentic. He perceives Cynthia "in person," addresses her as "Queen of the wide air" (205), and calls upon her to inspire his song about her amorous relationship with Endymion.

The direct treatment of myth in this stage of Mature-Experience is, however, not as transcendental as it appears. Myth is conceived of as a Coleridgean symbol that "partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible;"[61] hence, the transformation of the actual to the mythical world or vice versa is accomplished in a state of imaginative intensity. The interfusion of both worlds is therefore an aesthetic act that unites the "self-consciousness" of the stage of Maiden-Experience with the "self-abandonment" of the stage of Infancy in order to create the mature vision of the stage of Maturity--a vision of the interaction of "the bright, clear weather,/ . . . men of health in unusual cheer/And young Apollo on his pedestal" (214-5, 217). This kind of mythical vision, associated with Mature-Experience, is possible because concerns in the world of myth seem to coincide with those in the normal world. For instance, the creator of the myth of Endymion is himself a lover--a fact which heightens his sympathy for Cynthia and makes him an active participant in the Endymion myth rather than a passive witness. Other than the poet, many other persons, especially lovers, are affected by the events in the world of myth. In such an enchanted atmosphere,

> The breezes were ethereal, and pure.
> And crept through half-closed lattices to cure
> The languid sick; it cool'd their fever'd sleep,
> And soothed them in slumbers full and deep.
> Soon they awoke clear-eyed: nor burnt with thirsting,
> Nor with hot fingers, nor with temples burning:
> And springing up, they met the wond'ring sight
> Of their dear friends, nigh foolish with delight;
> Who feel their arms and breasts and kiss and stare,
> And on their placid foreheads part their hair.
> Young men, and maidens at each other gaz'd
> With hands held back, and motionless, amaz'd
> To see the brightness in each other's eyes;
> And so they stood, fill'd with sweet surprise,
> Until their tongues were loos'd in poesy.(221-235)

While the obvious sensuality of the lovers seems to detract from the total artistic success of this scene, it must be realized that the lovers are partaking of the bliss in a myth about love, and that sensuality is an integral part of love. Indeed, the charm of the mythical world overflows into the actual one and objectifies the sensuality of the human lovers because it unites both worlds in this stage of Mature vision. Many poets are born in this union. The union of Cynthia and Endymion does not only inspire the myth-maker to create the myth, it also moves the "wholly" human lovers to sing of love. The Endymion myth thus becomes the myth of the Latmians too, making the poet realize that this union of both worlds forms the basis of the symbolic import of myths.[62]

Aware of the true significance of myths, the Mature-poet is now able to reassess the previous stages of myth-making and thereby acquire a knowledge of the harmony of life that the chamber of Mature-Thought offers him through the stage of Mature-Experience. He can now see the stages of Infancy and Mature-Experience as representing man's "unconscious" and "self-conscious" approaches to myth respectively, even as he perceives how the "human meaning implicit in myths"[63] is highlighted in the mature or direct recreation of old myths. The Mature-poet can now see the myths of Pan and Psyche as depicting complementary aspects of human life, while the myth of Narcissus becomes a symbolic enactment of the poet's struggle to reconcile his apparent isolation with a concern for humanity. Similarly, the "old myth of the moon goddess and her lover Endymion [in 'I Stood Tip-toe'] already symbolizes for Keats[64] the inspiration of the poet by supreme beauty,"[65] because it represents man's inspiration by the aesthetic ideal which Keats regards as man's highest goal in life. The poet, who through an intense response to the wonders of nature is vouchsafed the vision of the consummation of the love between Cynthia and Endymion in "I Stood Tip-toe" is closely related to the poet who later elaborates the myth in Keats's Endymion. Both poets are lovers (190); hence they are ineluctably drawn to the myth. In actively participating in the myth, both poets work out Keats's central belief in Endymion that the quest for ideal love is the same as the quest for the aesthetic ideal, and symbolic of the search for a mature understanding of the nature of man's existence in this world. Other events in "I Stood Tip-toe" foreshadow Keats's elaborate and symbolic treatment of the tragic aspects of human life in Hyperion. The agony of Saturn becomes symbolic of man's suffering in the world--a theme which Keats sympathetically deals with in "I Stood Tip-toe" by making ordinary human beings share of the supreme joy of the mythical union: "The ethereal breezes . . . crept through half-closed lattices to cure/The languid sick; it cool'd their fever'd sleep" (221-3). The blissful breezes that surrounded the lovers in the world of myth are transformed into medicinal breezes as they come in contact with sick and suffering people. Thus, the myth contributes to the ultimate aim of poetry which to Keats is "To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man" ("Sleep and Poetry," 246-7). Myth like poetry, in Keats's view, does not necessarily relieve the cares of man by inviting him to escape into a transcendental world. Rather, it binds man to the earth by "moving away the pall/From our dark spirits" (Endymion, I, 12-13).

3

Keats's central myth is that of "the making of a great poet or the 'birth' of a man of achievement."[66] It is essentially the depiction of the poet's "ordeals" or "rites of passage"[67] in each of the three stages of myth-making established in "I Stood Tip-toe." Since the three stages parallel the three chambers of the human mind in Keats's simile of life, it follows that the poet's search for profound mythic and poetic insight corresponds with his quest for the true meaning of art and life. As Kenneth Allott points out, Keats's "ideas on the meaning and function of myth are always bound up with his attempt to make sense of the human situation."[68] Keats's myth of the birth of a great poet is thus symbolic of the birth of a great man because the ultimate meaning of life which the poet discovers at the conclusion of his quest is actually the Keatsian mythopoeic view of the world--a view which, according to Perkins, centres on the subsuming of the "evil of the world within a wider, more hopeful vision of things."[69]

While Keats's mythopoeic vision of the world is discernible in all his poems and in most of his letters, Endymion and the Hyperion fragments constitute the really explicit Keatsian myth of the poet's development. Not only are these poems Keats's only explicit myths, they also contain the most sustained elaborations of the three stages in a poet's progress towards maturity. That the poems are recreations of old myths does not detract from their originality. Endymion and the Hyperion fragments are neither imitative reproductions of classical myths nor "the mere filling out of the old myths with poetical ornaments."[70] Believing that old myths are useful "raw materials" for the creation of new myths, Keats transforms the ancient myths of Endymion and Hyperion into new myths that are capable of projecting his own vision of the world. However, it is important to remark that Keats's choice of these old myths as instruments for his own myth is not gratuitous. Aware of the similarities between the ancient myths and his own, Keats feels that, insofar as the earlier Endymion and Hyperion myths are enactments of "the universal patterns of motivations and conduct"[71] in the lives of "great spirits,"[72] they are capable of furnishing him with valuable thematic and structural patterns for the realization of his "modern" myth of the poet.

For Keats, the central character in his myth is a great spirit who is a "hero" like all great spirits in the long tradition of Western mythology.[73] Hence, the Keatsian myth "inherits its deep binding power and its richness of suggestion from more archaic sources"[74] than just the Greek myths of Endymion and Hyperion. Van Ghent, discerning the similarity between Keats's myth and many other ancient myths of the hero, points out some characteristics that Keats's myth shares with the older myths. She maintains that Keats's poet-hero is not only like the main character in the traditional hero myth but that his quest is also similar to that of earlier heroes because he "is afflicted with a feverish 'strife of opposites'" and forced to undertake an archetypal quest in which he "descends underground (or ascends pinnacles)" before he eventually "wins immortality or 'identity.'"[75] The "strife of opposites" which precipitates the poet-hero's quest in Keats's myth is variously represented in the poems. In _Endymion_, for instance, the strife results from the seeming incompatibility of human and divine love in the mind of the protagonist, in _Hyperion_ the ostensible conflict is between change (fall) and progress (redemption), while in "The Fall of Hyperion" the apparent opposition between art and life is the cause of the conflict. Whatever the sources of strife are in the different poems that combine to project the Keatsian myth, it is certain that the goal of the poet-hero's quest is the same in all poems--that is, the discovery and intimate experiencing of the harmonious coalescence of the supposed opposites.

Since the poet-hero's archetypal quest is basic to the myth that appears "everywhere in Keats's poetry,"[76] the Keatsian myth depicts the "education" of the poet in each of the three stages outlined in "I Stood Tip-toe"--

stages that show the poet's progress towards a better knowledge of art and life. All Keats's poems contribute to the full realization of this myth in the sense that the "poetical characters" ("personas")[77] in each of the poems represent the poet-hero at various points in his three-stage search for the meaning of art and life. Nevertheless, Endymion's quest for ideal love may be regarded as Keats's central, and most sustained single effort at the mythical depiction of the poet-hero's education because *Endymion*, as Keats's only *complete* myth, provides the reader with the most complete version of the Keatsian myth. Moreover, the main *telos* of the adventure of the poet-hero is fully stated and worked out in *Endymion*. The poet-hero's goal, revealed to the reader in the introductory section of the first book of *Endymion*, is the experiencing of the essence of beauty in all things (I, 1-33). This objective is restated by Endymion himself as the attainment of "fellowship with essence" (I, 779) and reaffirmed in Glaucus's scroll as a participation in the bliss offered by a discovery of "the symbol essences of all motions, shapes, forms and substances" (III, 697-703). Evidently, the crowning experience of the quest is an intimate partaking of the joys associated with a knowledge of the Keatsian aesthetic ideal or "principle of beauty in all things"--an ideal that has been fully discussed in the fourth chapter of this study. And, as has also become obvious from the Keatsian system examined so far, this ideal can be attained by the poet-hero only in the third or final stage of his quest.

When the main action begins in Endymion (I, 63ff.), the protagonist is no longer in the first or Infant stage of his quest. His discontentment with the "thoughtless participation mystique"[78] of the Latmian worshippers of Pan makes him different from the other Infant-minded Latmians and introduces him to the second stage of the quest. Similarly, in many other poems like the great odes, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and "The Fall of Hyperion," the reader first encounters the poet-hero in the stage of Maiden-Experience. However, the fact that the characters that represent the poet-hero in most of Keats's poems are introduced to the reader in the second stage does not mean that Keats disregards the experiences of these characters in the stage of Infancy. All that it means is that the experiences of other characters who are unable to progress beyond the first stage are depicted as a means of revealing the poet-hero's state of Infancy. For instance, insofar as Endymion shared the same faith with the Latmian worshippers of Pan at some time past, the outlook of the Latmians on life becomes an adequate reflection of Endymion's infant outlook on life. Hence, what the knight-at-arms in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" experienced before his dream and what the dreamer-poet learned before he took the visioninducing draught in "The Fall of Hyperion" (I, 148-9) are representations of the Infant knowledge of the poet-hero.

In Endymion, Keats concentrates on the lives of the Latmians as a means of revealing what Endymion or the poet-hero has graduated from. Like the Infant-poet in "I Stood Tip-toe," the Latmians in Endymion "thoughtlessly" accept the bond between all things, creatures, persons, and deities--a bond which to them is unquestionably fostered by Pan. They believe that Pan is the visible and invisible source of the being that flows through all things, quickens nature to productivity and provides the basis for happiness in the lives of all people. The priest enumerates the many manifestations of Pan as he urges the Latmians to offer their thanks to Pan for all the blessings they have received:

> "Yea, every one attend! for in good truth
> Our vows are wanting to our great god Pan.
> Are not our lowing heifers sleeker than
> Night-swollen mushrooms? Are not our wide plains
> Speckled with countless fleeces? Have not rains
> Green'd over April's lap? No howling sad
> Sickens our fearful ewes; and we have had
> Great bounty from Endymion our lord.
> The earth is glad: the merry lark has pour'd
> His early song against yon breezy sky,
> That spreads so clear o'er our solemnity."
> (I, 212-222)

In enumerating the manifold blessings from Pan, the priest reiterates the general Latmian faith that human happiness and natural bounty come from a rather concrete world of myth. Even the joys of Endymion's reign are seen as divine gifts by the Latmians who live in an Infant world where myth and reality interfuse. In Hyperion, the unfallen Titans live in an Infant world which is similar to that of the Latmians. The interfusion of the actual and the imaginative is evident in Saturn's recall of the life of the Titans before the fall--a life consisting of

> " . . . godlike exercise
> "Of influence benign on planets pale,
> "Of admonitions to the winds and seas,
> "Of powerful sway above man's harvesting,
> "And all those acts which Deity supreme
> "Doth ease its heart of love in
> . . . .
> "Beautiful things made anew, for the surprise
> "Of the sky-children." (I, 107-112; 132-3)

The "sky-children" are the heavenly counterparts of the earthly Latmians. Yet, both the sky-children and the Latmians live in a world in which myth and reality are undifferentiated; hence, the manner in which Saturn's act of love benefits the sky-children in Hyperion is identical with how Pan's act of love benefits the Latmians in Endymion.

The Latmians, the unfallen Titans and the Infant-poets are all regarded by Keats as "Intelligences" whose unconscious lives of bliss make them "gods" and enable them to live either in "a long immortal dream" (Lamia, I, 127-8)[79] or "in a haven in the world,/Where they may thoughtlessly sleep away their days" ("The Fall of Hyperion," I, 148-9). All these "Intelligences" are, in Keats's myth of the poet's growth, symbols of human beings who are satisfied with the bliss of the Infant world and are therefore under no pressure to seek the truths in the other two stages. Just as the Infant-poets are free from the need to strive for maturity, so also are the Intelligences spared the ordeals that ultimately lead to the acquisition of Identities or Soul-states. Little wonder then, that while the Latmians are happy in the Infant world, Endymion recoils from what he considers to be the naiveté of his people.

Endymion's dissatisfaction with the Infant love of the Latmians for Pan which marks the beginning of his Maiden love for Cynthia symbolizes the self-consciousness of the poet-hero--a self-consciousness that signals his progress from Infancy to Maiden-Experience. Similarly, the apparent contrast between Endymion's possession of Cynthia in the dream world and his loss of her in the real world represents the seeming incompatibility between the Maiden-poet's imaginative and actual experiences. Hence, Endymion's pursuit of a transcendental love and the Maiden-poet's pursuit of an escapist kind of art in this stage of Maiden-Experience reflect the brightness of the chamber of Maiden-Thought, while Endymion's "irredeemable" loss of Cynthia in real life and the Maiden-poet's view of real life as "unmitigated" tragedy reflect the darkness of the same chamber. The discovery of the ostensible opposition between the real and the ideal, art and life, change and progress constitutes the main education of the poet in this stage.

The poet-hero's education is accomplished by means of different ordeals that seem to emphasize the conflicts between art and life in this stage of Maiden-Experience. Endymion, the fallen Titans and other Maiden-poets in Keats's works undergo ordeals that are symbolic of those undergone by the poet-hero in this stage. For instance, the dreamer's experience in "The Fall of Hyperion," Saturn's dream about his Infant reign over the sky-children in *Hyperion*, the Maiden-poet's single-minded pursuit of the dream offered by the nightingale's song in the "Ode to a Nightingale" and the protagonist's dream about an airy Cynthia in *Endymion* variously depict the poet-hero's exposure to the "brightness" of Maiden-Experience. On the other hand, the dreamer's immediate reaction to the tragic figure of Saturn in "The Fall of Hyperion," Saturn's agony caused by his fall in *Hyperion*, the Maiden-poet's frightening exposure of the tragic circumstances of life in the "Ode to a Nightingale" and Endymion's experiencing of the unattractive realities of life without Cynthia are variations on the poet-hero's feeling of the "darkness" of Maiden-Experience.

In *Endymion*, the protagonist's pursuit of his limited conception of the nature of Cynthia constitutes the poet-hero's fascination with art as a means of escaping reality

--a fascination which reflects the bright side of Maiden-Experience. Since Endymion sees Cynthia as an ideal that relieves him of the responsibility of being associated with reality in this stage, he believes that the goddess of his dream (art) is unrelated to any actual maiden in Latmos (reality). For Endymion, therefore, the winning of Cynthia's love is "a higher hope/ . . . of too wide, too rainbow-large a scope" that it frees him from all responsibilities to his society (I, 774-6). Moreover, he feels that "to fret after the myriads of earthly wrecks" (I, 776-7) is outside the sphere of anyone who seeks the ultimate. Hence, he conceives of such activities as are capable of leading him to the ideal in terms that are absolutely unrelated to the ordinary world. He seeks a "heavenly religion" derived from the enchantment of Aeolian music, melodious prophecying, and charms of the mythical world. When tragic incidents surface in his idealized vision, they are usually unrelated to reality; the giant battles of gods become mere theatrical diversions. Since he does not at this point understand the symbolic relation of giant battles to the human situation, his belief in this stage that if anyone feels these great events he can "step/ Into a sort of oneness, and his state/Is like that of floating spirits" (I, 795-7) is more like that of the Maiden-poet in the "Ode to a Nightingale" who feels that he can "leave the world" (II, 9) and its suffering behind

(III), fly to the world of the immortal bird (IV), and be "released from the painful world of actuality."[80] Similarly, his view of love as the highest ideal (I, 805-7) is vitiated by transcendentalism. The Cynthia he seeks in this stage is too airy to be either true or related to reality. Essentially, Endymion is deluded by the airy promises of the brightness of his Maiden-imagination.[81]

While Endymion's wish to live in the dream world of "Cynthian" charms which causes him to substitute illusion for reality is the "ordeal" based on the bright effect of the chamber of Maiden-Thought, his "venoming of all his days" in the normal world (like the dreamer in "The Fall of Hyperion") is the "ordeal" based on the dark effect of this chamber. Endymion's feeling of the dark effects of this stage of his development thus consists of his loss of Cynthia in real life and his deep sense of disappointment which causes him to exaggerate the "ugliness" in nature and the "treachery" in life:

> . . . all the pleasant hues
> Of heaven and earth had faded: deepest shades
> Were deepest dungeons; heaths and sunny glades
> Were full of pestilent light; our taintless rills
> Seem'd sooty, and o'erspread with upturn'd gills
> Of dying fish; the vermeil rose had blown
> In frightful scarlet, and its thorns out-grown
> Like spiked aloe. If an innocent bird
> Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and stirr'd
> In little journeys, I beheld in it
> A disguis'd demon, missioned to knit
> My soul with darkness. (I, 691-702)

The darkness in Endymion's soul is the horrid mood that infects nature in this scene. The negative aspects of nature are over-emphasized in a manner that is reminiscent of the Maiden-poet's consideration of nature as an arena of "eternal fierce destruction" in the epistle "To J. H. Reynolds" (97). Endymion's horrid mood also affects his perception of life, and the Latmian society because he recoils from his people's worship of Pan, regards real maidens as worthless in comparison with Cynthia, and views his royal duties in Latmos as uninspiring.

Endymion's "dream-life" with Cynthia (which accounts for his wish to substitute visionary for real experiences) represents his feeling of the bright effect of the chamber of Maiden-Thought, while his "waking-life" without Cynthia (which is responsible for his viewing reality as repulsive and for his "venoming all his days"[82]) constitutes his experiencing of the dark effect of the same chamber. Nevertheless, Endymion's entire Maiden-Experience is not marked by only one experience of the bright, and another of the dark, effects of this chamber but by many exposures to each of the two effects. In the first book of Endymion alone, the protagonist is exposed to each of the two effects for up to four times.[83] In the second, third and fourth books, Endymion's many exposures to these effects are augmented by his being a sensitive witness to experiences like his own in the relationships of other lovers such as Venus and Adonis, Arethusa and Alpheus, and Glaucus and Circe. Each new feeling of the effects of the chamber intensifies Endymion's Maiden-Experience by revealing to him new aspects in his dream-life with Cynthia (art) and his waking-life without her (reality). Many scenes like the Cynthian world of love (I, 540-670; II, 707-827), the underworld palace of Dian (II, 259-262; 301-313), the consummation of Venus's love for Adonis (II, 477-589) and the celebrations in the palace of Neptune (III, 862-932) combine to form Endymion's feeling of the brightness of Maiden-Experience. And scenes like the Latmian world without Cynthia (I, 691-702; II, 855-869), Venus's pining for Adonis's love (II, 457-478), the pathetic existence of Glaucus (III, 192-230) and the sorrow of the Indian maiden (IV, 30-250) constitute Endymion's feeling of the darkness of Maiden-Experience.

In many of the great odes, the main character is involved in activities that may be regarded as reflections of his feeling of the dark and bright effects of Maiden-Experience. For instance, in the "Ode to a Nightingale," the experiencing of the brightness of this stage in the poet-hero's quest is evident in the pleasure he associates with Lethe (I, 4), "melodious plots" (I, 8-10) and mythical worlds (II, 3-10; IV, 1-10; V, 1-10), while his feeling of the darkness is obvious in the sorrow he sees in "the fever and fret" of human existence (III, 3), the sickness and death of young people (III, 4-6) and the tragedy of Ruth

(VII, 6-10). In the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the bright and dark effects correspond with the permanence of art and the transience of life respectively, while in the "Ode on Melancholy," all attempts to escape reality and those connected with "the wakeful anguish of the soul" (I, 10) form the Maiden-Experience of the protagonist, and symbolize the poet-hero's "ordeals" in the second stage of his quest for mature poetic insight.

In Hyperion, Saturn's recall of his Infant reign over the world, like the dreamer-poet's sojourn in the mysterious garden in "The Fall of Hyperion," reveals his feeling of the first effect of Maiden-Experience. On the other hand, Saturn's agony caused by his fall, like the dreamer-poet's experiences in the temple of Saturn, marks the second effect noticeable in this stage. Keats captures Saturn's sad plight by portraying his pathetic appearance (Hyperion, I, 1-14), and by making Thea outline the changes that Saturn's fall has caused in the universe:

> " . . . heaven is parted from thee, and the earth
> "Knows thee not, thus afflicted for a God;
> "And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,
> "Has from thy sceptre pass'd; and all the air
> "Is emptied of thy hoary majesty.
> "Thy thunder conscious of the new command,
> "Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house;
> "And thy sharp lightning in unpractis'd hands
> "Scorches and burns our once serene domain."
> (I, 55-63)

The chaotic state of the universe which Thea depicts results from Saturn's loss of control over the various natural forces through whose activities he ruled over heaven and earth.

Saturn's fall affects other Titans too. Hyperion is first plagued by bad omens before he falls--he relinquishes his role as sun god. Oceanus, the god of the sea, and Enceladus, the god of wrath and volcanoes, are among other Titans like Mnemosyne, Thea and Clymene who fall with Saturn. With the fall, the Titans shed the divinity which made them "solemn, undisturb'd/Unruffled" (I, 330-1) and take on human frailties like "fear, hope and wrath;/Actions of rage and passion" (I, 332-3). The dethronement of the Titans and its attendant suffering in *Hyperion* become part of the dreamer-poet's vicarious feeling of the dark effect of Maiden-Experience in "The Fall of Hyperion." The dreamer-poet witnesses the intense sorrow of the Titans (I, 215-460) as a complement to his difficult task of ascending the steps leading to Saturn's shrine, and to his rather unsettling dialogue with Moneta.

Insofar as Keats believes that an intense feeling of both effects of Maiden-Experience leads to insights that facilitate progress to the final stage (Mature-Experience), it follows that there are inherent pointers to maturity in the second-stage experiences of Endymion, the Titans, the protagonist in the great odes, and the dreamer-poet in "The Fall of Hyperion." These representatives of the poet-hero must, however, understand the pointers before they can progress to the next stage. Hence, it is reasonable to regard Endymion's ability to pursue the ideal revealed to him in his dream as an indication that he may eventually progress beyond the second stage. Furthermore, what he learns from the Venus-Adonis myth, and from collaborating with Glaucus suggests that the "ideal" love which is the goal of his quest is actually attainable. That the love he eventually wins in the third stage differs from his earlier notion of it demonstrates how effectively the inherent pointers to his success have contributed to the correction of his limited understanding of the ideal.

Endymion's dream-encounter with Cynthia is, in the words of Campbell, his "call to quest."[84] What Endymion seeks is the meaning of his dream. Peona's contention that dreams are meaningless because "they're more slight/Than the mere nothing that engenders them" (I, 754-6) does not make him give up the quest. Believing in the Keatsian dictum that "What the imagination siezes as Beauty must be truth--whether it existed before or not,"[85] Endymion continues the quest which takes him beyond the immediate Latmian environment. He descends into the underworld, explores the inner seas, and takes a flight into the air[86] where he witnesses and participates in other quests that are related to his own. His contact with other lovers in the world of myth enables him to understand his own plight, encourages him to persevere in his search, and prepares him for a new vision of the ideal.

The myth of Venus and Adonis points towards Endymion's progress to the next stage by making his goal an attainable one.[87] The myth shows that Endymion's quest is basically a re-enactment of the Adonis story. Aware that the alternation between bliss and agony had once troubled Adonis, Endymion's hope for immortality through Cynthia is re-kindled. Venus herself encourages Endymion by informing him that his quest will be successful if he perseveres. The awakening of Adonis from his long slumber also enables Endymion to become aware of how the ideal is related to the real, because Adonis's revival symbolizes the coming of spring.

While the myth of Adonis points out the path to success, the myth of Glaucus reveals possible obstacles on the way to success, and suggests ways of overcoming such obstacles. Endymion is told how Glaucus's impatience cost him the love of Scylla and exposed him to Circe's curse. Glaucus's pathetic appearance enlists Endymion's sympathy, while his humanitarian task of storing all the drowned lovers makes Endymion a willing collaborator in the reviving of the ship-wrecked lovers. The celebrations in the palace of Neptune mark both the revival of a sense of social responsibility in Endymion and the neutralizing of the Circean curse on Glaucus. Having helped to free Glaucus from his curse and having taken part in the lovers' feast, Endymion is poised for progress to the next stage of his quest. Glaucus's dilemma in his relationship with Scylla and Circe also foreshadows Endymion's internal conflict in the fourth book, caused by his love for the Indian maiden in spite of his pursuit of Cynthia.

Just as the intensity of Maiden-Experience provides Endymion with a valuable insight into the nature of his quest and makes it possible for him to progress from Maiden to Mature Experience, so also does Saturn's plight (like that of other Titans) contain elements that suggest the possibility of his progress to the final stage. Saturn's determination to find out why the Titans fell (I, 27-149) paves the way for his discovery of what may help him survive the agony of the fall and inch him towards Mature-Experience. Oceanus offers his explanation of the fall to Saturn in the council of the fallen gods. He maintains that the fall of the Titans is natural because it is in accordance with the "eternal law/That first in beauty should be first in might" (II, 228-9). Oceanus insists that "to bear all naked truths,/And envisage all circumstances, all calm,/ . . . is the top of sovereignty" (II, 203-5). If Saturn wishes to regain his sovereignty--albeit under the new regime of Apollo--he must learn to feel the "naked truth" of his fall intensely and calmly.

Insofar as Oceanus and Clymene are willing to make the necessary adjustments, and accept all the changes resulting from the fall of the old gods, they can be regarded as Titans who are poised on the threshold of the final stage of the poet-hero's development. Hence, it is fair to suggest that if Saturn and other Titans ever overcome their despondency and accept the "natural course of events"[88] that is resposible for their dethronement, they can proceed to the stage of Mature-Experience. In fact, the intensity of their grief seems to point towards the possibility of their surviving the worst effects of the fall--a possibility that may have become a certainty if Keats had completed the poem. In the extant fragments of the poem, however, Keats portrays Mnemosyne as the only Titan who actually becomes part of the new order of things: "She belongs to the world of the conquered and the conquering."[89] Not only has Apollo seen her in his dreams, he also gains the knowledge that deifies him from her (Hyperion, III, 63-132). In "The Fall of Hyperion," Mnemosyne becomes Moneta. She guards the temple and shrine of Saturn. She reveals the tragic history of the gods to the dreamer-poet in order to educate him and make him a mature poet. Keats finds the Mnemosyne-Moneta symbol useful in expressing the transition from the old to the new order of things[90]--a transition which symbolizes the poet-hero's progress from Maiden to Mature poetic insight.

In the great odes, Keats bases the poet-hero's transition on the peception of the inadequacy of experiences that reflect only one of the two effects of Maiden-Experience. Basically, the opposition between the two effects becomes less significant as the poet-hero feels each of the effects intensely. He discovers that the bird's song in the "Ode to a Nightingale" is melodious and enchanting, but he also finds out that the song belongs to "faery lands forlorn." He is fascinated by the unchanging beauty represented by the urn in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," but he is disappointed that the beauty of the urn lacks the warmth of real life. And in the "Ode on Melancholy," he is attracted by the promises offered by "Lethe" and yet he realizes that those promises include that of oblivion. All the fascinations offered by the bright part of Maiden-Experience seem to lack the distinctive attractions of the dark effect which is represented by the tragic world of suffering in the "Ode to a Nightingale," the world of process and change in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," and the "wakeful anguish of the soul" in the "Ode on Melancholy." By intensely feeling each of the two effects of Maiden-Experience, the poet-hero becomes less able to distinguish one from the other. This state of "confusion-in-intensity" marks the transition from the second to the third stage--a state which forces the poet-hero to ask, "Do I sleep or wake?" in the "Ode to a Nightingale."

The poet-hero does not seem to move beyond the transitional point in the "Ode to a Nightingale." When the poem ends, his intimate feeling of the two effects of Maiden-Experience smoothens the sharp edges of the split between his imaginative and actual experiences but it does not necessarily create a bond between the opposites. This bond is, however, created in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and the "Ode on Melancholy" as a sign of the poet-hero's attainment of mature poetic insight in the third stage of his quest. Beauty and truth are equated as a demonstration of the poetic insight into life that the poet-hero has felt in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn". "'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'" summarizes the mature poet's vision of the world. In the "Ode on Melancholy," the mature poet states his vision thus:

> Ay, in the very temple of delight
> Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
> Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
> Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
> His soul shall taste the sadness of her might
> And be among her cloudy trophies hung. (III, 6-10)

In "bursting Joy's grape against his palate fine," the poet-hero achieves maturity and can now perceive the unity of being in all things. This harmonious interrelationship of all things is symbolically depicted in "To Autumn" by placing the "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" in concordant relationship with other seasons. A year becomes the larger context in which every season plays its role--a role that is congruent with roles played by other seasons. This seasonal harmony symbolizes the harmony in the life of a mature man, the interrelation of art and life, and the "principle of beauty in all things."

Endymion's sojourn in the "Cave of Quietude" (Endymion, IV, 513-562) and the Indian maiden's rejection of his love mark the transition from Maiden to Mature Experience. As soon as the pleasures of the aerial trip vanish with the loss of Cynthia and the Indian maiden who accompanied him in his flight, Endymion "descends" into the Cave of Quietude for solace:

> . . . Happy gloom!
> Dark paradise! where pale becomes bloom
> Of health by due; where silence dreariest
> Is most articulate; where hopes infest;
> Where those eyes are brightest far that keep
> Their lids shut longest in a dreamless sleep.
> (IV, 537-542)

The intensity of his feeling of loss blurs the distinction between sorrow and joy--"anguish does not sting; nor pleasure pall" (IV, 526)--in a manner that recalls the Indian maiden's sorrow revealed in her song. When Endymion leaves the Cave of Quietude, he beholds the Indian maiden and declares his love for her while repudiating Cynthia and all forms of ideals. He declares:

> I have clung
> To nothing, lov'd nothing, nothing seen
> Or felt but a great dream! O I have been
> Presumptuous against love, against the sky,
> Against all elements, against the tie
> Of mortals each to each, against the blooms
> Of flowers, rush of rivers, and the tombs

> Of heroes gone!
> . . . .
> No, never more
> Shall airy voices cheat me to the shore
> Of tangled wonder, breathless and aghast.
> Adieu, my daintiest dream! (IV, 636-43; 653-6)

Although he has been presumptuous about love, humanity and nature, Endymion's sin is not the pursuit of the ideal; hence, his rejection of the dream is as bad as his rejection of reality. In fact, his supposed affirmation of actuality is vitiated by his desire to live with the Indian maiden in a kind of hazy world that is separate from that in which other human beings live:

> Let us aye love each other; let us fare
> On forest fruits, and never, never go
> Among the abodes of mortals here below
> Or be by phantoms duped. (IV, 626-9)

In a sense, therefore, Endymion spurns both the real world and the ideal one in the type of life which he offers to the Indian maiden. The maiden rejects this offer, and thereby forces him to move on to the third stage of his quest in which he can discover that the ideal resides in the ordinary and vice versa.

The transformation of the Indian maiden into Cynthia before Endymion's eyes signals his Mature-Experience. This "miracle" convinces him of the interpenetration of the imaginative and real worlds. He learns that he can have "fellowship with essence" only when he is able to have fellowship with the normal or real. As soon as he recognizes that the Indian maiden and Cynthia are one, the Indian maiden accepts his love. Endymion and his new love return to the normal world of Latmos. Endymion is now willing to perform his royal duties since he has also discovered the symbolic significance of Pan to his people in his quest for the ideal. Of course, his ultimate achievement symbolizes the mature vision of the poet-hero--a vision in which the aesthetic ideal is discernible in the veridical world.

While in *Endymion* love is the instrument by which the artist feels his way towards the discovery of the essence of things, in *Hyperion* the agony of the Titans is the means by which the poet-hero feels the tragic circumstances of man's life. Apollo's intimate perception of the grief of Saturn precipitates the deifying pangs that constitute a transition from the reign of Saturn (Maiden-Experience) to that of Apollo (Mature-Experience):

> Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush
> All the immortal fairness of his limbs:
> . . . and with a pang
> As hot as death is chill, with fierce convulse
> Die into life: so young Apollo anguish'd:
> His very hair, his golden tresses famed
> Kept undulation round his eager neck.
> (III, 124-5; 128-135)

With the subsiding of his pangs of deification, Apollo takes over the kingdom lost by the Titans. His reign (which commences in the third and final stage of the poet-hero's quest) is the reign of beauty (the artist) because Oceanus maintains that the enthronement of Apollo is in accordance with "the eternal law/That first in beauty should be first in might" (II, 228-9). Since the suffering of the Titans symbolizes the fate of mankind,[91] and since Apollo (the artist) is enthroned only after he has intimately felt the suffering of the Titans (mankind), it follows that Apollo's rule is a symbolic affirmation of the usefulness of art and the artist in a world "where men sit and hear each other groan;/Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,/ Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies."

Apollo's reign (which is coterminous with the rule of the artist) is manifest through "the blissful melody" (II, 280) which pervades the entire universe. Apollo in Hyperion is still the "God of the golden lyre" of the "Hymn to Apollo" whose music in combination with that of all immortal poets flows through nature in the "Ode to Apollo." If the god's "blissful melody" in the ode and in the hymn seems to reflect the brightness of Maiden-Experience,[92] in Hyperion the melody definitely reflects Mature-Experience because it comes from Apollo's "enormous knowledge" of the tragic part of life. Insofar as his "lyre all golden" (III, 63) produces the "new tuneful wonder" (III, 670) and captures the tragic events that deified Apollo, it is music that can "soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man" ("Sleep and Poetry," 247): thereby justifying the rule of the artist.

In "The Fall of Hyperion," Keats makes the nascent poet (dreamer) go through experiences that are similar to those of Apollo as a means of establishing the symbolic link between the god and the artist. The dreamer-poet's transition from Maiden to Mature vision parallels that of Apollo in the sense that his throes of transformation from dreamer to poet are like Apollo's pangs of deification. The same goddess (Mnemosyne-Moneta) is in charge of guiding both of them through the trauma that leads to maturity. Also, the reason which Moneta gives for the admission of the dreamer to the shrine of Saturn is reminiscent of that given by Mnemosyne for the enthronement of Apollo: "'Thou hast felt/What 'tis to die and live again before/Thy fated hour, that thou hast power to do so/Is thy safety" (I, 141-4). The dreamer gains maturity or becomes a poet only after he has sympathetically identified with Saturn's grief and perceived how the fate of the Titans represents the fate of mankind. As a mature poet, he is aware that the true poet is not "a mere dreamer" but is he to whom "the miseries of the world/Are miseries, and will not let him rest" (I, 148-9).

Essentially, Keats uses the mythical quests of various poetical characters to symbolize the poet's quest for mature aesthetic insight. The three stages which they pass through enable them to examine various aspects of imaginative and actual experiences before they can embrace the aesthetic ideal. The stage of Maiden-Experience, with its two effects and its transitional point, marks the most significant part of the poet-hero's education in Keats's myth. Whatever mission each character undertakes--Endymion seeks ideal love, the dreamer wishes to become a mature poet, and Apollo "seeks" a kingdom--leads to the same goal. The goal is the attainment of what is to Keats the aesthetic ideal--a goal that is achieved in the third stage. In all successful quests, the poet-hero discovers the necessity of life to art and vice versa. Art, for Keats, cannot turn its back on human suffering. Therefore, the poet-hero at the conclusion of his quest knows that art recognizes the tragic elements of life and endeavours to create beautiful things that are joys for ever because they are "a cheering light/Unto our souls, and bind to us so fast/That whether there be shine or gloom o'ercast/They must be with us, or we die" (Endymion, I, 30-33).

CONCLUSION

The central concerns of this study have been to elucidate the major ideas of John Keats and place them within the integrated conception of art which underlies his poetic practice and his critical assessments of artistic works in order to enhance his image as a literary critic. His ideas and unified critical vision have been constructed from the apparently sporadic, fragmentary, and detached statements about poetry (art) and poets (artists) that abound in his poems, letters and miscellaneous prose, because it is believed that his remarks, in spite of their informality, contain a unified artistic vision that is still relevant today; or at the very least, the remarks "add up to a considerable body of criticism."[1] Moreover, the cardinal notions in his poetics--notions like "Negative Capability," "intensity," "poetical character," "poetic imagination" and "Beauty"--have been elucidated and related to each other as a means of demonstrating the coherence of, and implicitly resolving most of the supposed contradictions in, his critical thought. Finally, it has been maintained throughout the study that Keats's distinctive brand of Romantic aesthetics evolves from his commitment to poetry that has "a direct applicability to human life."[2]

Keats's intimate involvement in life and art accounts for his belief that the "old and vexing conflict between art and life"[3] which Plato calls the "ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry"[4] is spurious. Convinced that life and art are man's direct and indirect experiences of the world, he propounds their mutual interdependence. He contends that insofar as art draws upon life, and insofar as man benefits from the significant human experiences preserved in art, art and life illuminate and enrich each other. And then, he concludes that they are complementary, rather than conflicting, aspects of the total reality of man's existence.

For Keats, an individual's perception of the plight of man in this world of uncertainties is usually manifest in his life and art. He maintains that a view of the world as a harmonious blend of pleasant and unpleasant circumstances often translates into a form of art in which there is a complex unity of reality and idealism. He also states that an outlook on life that is governed by the seeming conflict between opposites is mostly reflected in art as an opposition between the visionary and the realistic. Life and its image in art thus make up the "total reality" in Keats's system. However, for Keats, the appropriate vision of the world is that which harmonizes, while the inappropriate one is that which isolates the potentialities and limitations of human life.

Poetry, according to Keats, must be "the natural utterance of the completest living . . . or it falls short of true poetry."[5] The "finest and completest living" designates the mastery of the disparate components of life and art, while "true poetry" refers to the expression of this mastery in art and life. Art and life are thereby presented as different elements of the same reality. As "the most genuine being in the world," the poet lives a "life of Allegory: his works are the comments on it."[6] The poet's life (viewed in its Allegorical form) is art, while his art (considered as a representation of the human condition) is life because the Keatsian system projects the coalescence of art and life; ensuring that poetry is not just an art form but also a way of life.

Remarking the interpenetration of art and life in the poetry and criticism of Keats, Trilling asserts that "being a poet was Keats's way of being a man."[7] Of course, Trilling's remark will best mirror Keats's point of view if it also assumes that being a man was Keats's way of being a poet. Keats's broad-based characterizations of the poet (artist) and his works are corollaries of the correlation between art and life. Since, for him, all works that embody the concord of the world (be they artistic or otherwise) constitute true poetry, and since all human beings who manifest this harmony in their lives and works are poets, it follows that all significant achievements in all fields of human endeavour can be called "poems" while all authors of these achievements can be regarded as poets. Hence, Keats considers Shakespeare's plays and Socrates's dialogues to be poetry, and regards Milton and Jesus Christ as poets.

These comprehensive concepts of poetry and the poet in Keats's works are reminiscent of the Platonic notions of "poetry . . . as creations of all great souls" and poets as "all masters of the arts."[8] In fact, Keats himself calls great poets souls and their works he terms expressions of the soul. Like Plato, Keats believes that "As various as the Lives of Men are--so various become their souls"[9] and the manifestations of their souls. While all those who have tasted the beauty of all things are souls to Keats, only those who perceive the "absolute forms" are souls to Plato. Keats's conception of the soul-making attribute is thus less transcendental than that of Plato. The understanding of, and participation in, the concord of the world are, to him, what makes an individual a soul or a great poet.

What the individual must embrace and manifest in his life and works (as an indication of his being a Soul or poet) is variously referred to by Keats as "the principle of beauty in all things," "the poetical in all things" and "Beauty is truth, truth beauty."[10] It is the aesthetic ideal of Keats's system--an ideal that complexly reflects the unity of art and life. It signifies the theme and style of great artistic creations, and the aim and nature of great men and poets. As the theme of art and aim of life, the aesthetic ideal denotes a profound knowledge of man and his world. This knowledge, which consists of intimate experiences of the apparently different circumstances and characteristics of life, informs the lives and works of all great men and poets. Similarly, as the style of art and as a way of life for poets, the ideal refers to the qualities of great art and life. Hence, the greatness of art and life is seen by Keats as dependent upon an effective manifestation of this ideal.

The interfusion of art and life in the aesthetic ideal is, in many respects, responsible for the interrelation of statements about art and life in Keats's works. Keats's direct remarks about, or depictions of, art are usually indirect observations on or portrayals of life, and vice versa; making art and life symbols of one another. Hence, Keats's consideration of "intensity" as "the excellence of every art," because it is "capable of making all disagreeables evaporate by being in close relationship with beauty and truth,"[11] is an indirect or figurative reference to the intensity which accounts for the excellence of life. The "beauty" and "truth" that traditionally designate the antipodal aspects of life and art are made complementary aspects of reality by intensity in Keats's system. "Intensity" is, of course, passionate experience or the force that "evaporates the disagreeables" by uniting opposites in art and life. Just as Keats's statements about art apply to life, so also do his statements about life apply to art. For example, his observation that "a man's life of any worth is a continuous allegory"[12] is a figurative statement about the Allegorical nature of great art. The complex nature of an Allegorical life--that in which the aesthetic ideal is evident--is symbolic of the complexity of Allegorical poetry.

"Allegory" and "symbolism" are usually identical in Keats's poetics. In most instances, they refer to correlations of art and life--correlations in which the "symbol" or "allegory" "partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible."[13] For example, Endymion's exertion for the sake of Cynthia's love does not only represent, but also subsumes an artistic endeavour; hence, it is an appropriate symbol of man's effort to understand his life in the world. If the comparison is stretched a little further, Endymion's exertion and the dreamer's struggle in "The Fall of Hyperion" become symbols of one another.

The fact that in Keats's works art and life "partake of the reality which they render intelligible" is responsible for the mutual interdependence of the two distinctive processes that make up Keats's scheme for the education of the individual or for making man discover and manifest the aesthetic ideal. One of the processes is that which enables an "Intelligence" to acquire "Soul-state." This process (which leads to the discovery of the ideal in life) is depicted in Endymion and outlined in his popular speculations on the "Chambers of the human mind" and on the world as "a vale of Soul-making."[14] The other process aims at making the individual a true poet or transforming the dreamer into a poet. It leads to the discovery of the ideal in art and is depicted in the Hyperion fragments and many other poems. These two processes, by subsuming, symbolizing and paralleling one another, combine to form the "complete scheme" for the education of great men and poets--a scheme which has three stages (Infant, Maiden and Mature stages) that are designed to enable the individual to improve his knowledge of reality through art and life.

The different characters or personas in Keats's works are almost invariably representatives of individuals who are in one of these three stages that make up the scheme of education. Each stage represents an approach to reality which the individual must thoroughly understand. The proper response to the needs of each stage leads to the individual's progress towards the attainment of the goal of his education. Keats's works seem to concern themselves always with the fate of characters who are engaged in some form of "mythical" quest for the aesthetic ideal. The quests like the myths in Keats's works are sometimes explicit and at other times they are implicit.

The characters' experiences in each of the stages represent "ordeals" that must be undergone as part of the training. While some characters complete the quest, others hardly progress beyond the first or second stages; hence, it is possible to characterize, in a general manner, the approaches to reality of individuals in each of the three stages. Those who are unable to distinguish between themselves and their environments are in the first or infant stage; those who have a sense of self-consciousness but approach the world as if it were a citadel of contradictions are in the second or Maiden stage where brightness and darkness symbolize mutually exclusive aspects of the world; and those who, in spite of their self-consciousness, perceive the harmonious bond between all things and experiences in the world are in the third or Mature stage where the acquisition of personal Identities by Intelligences, and transformation of dreamers into poets, signal the attainment of the aesthetic ideal.

The successful completion of the scheme of Soul-making leads to the birth of a great poet whose works can be considered to be great poetry. The aesthetic ideal which the poet acquires in the third stage of his training, being complex and related to an intimate understanding of life, guarantees the profundity of the knowledge which is implicit in all great poems. Basically, therefore, Keats's consideration of poetry as the highest product of man's life and his belief that "the greatest men in the world are poets"[15] derive their validity from the fact that the poet's education helps him to solve the problems "of life in the presence of ills," "of the apparent conflict between art and life," and of the usefulness of art in a world of vicissitudes.[16] Hence, he employs the standards established in this scheme of the poet's education for assessing the lives and works of all who claim to, aspire to, or live poetic lives.

Keats's pronouncements on the nature and function of the poet and his poetry are essential delineations of the characteristics and worth of those who have attained the aesthetic ideal through the Soul-making programme, and in their works. The attributes of Souls and the qualities of their works serve as ideal standards by which Keats judges the lives of poets and their poetic creations, including his own poetry and life. He applies virtually the same standards in his judgement of poets and their works because, as has been stated earlier, he regards poems as images of their creators or as expressions of the souls of poets. In fact, since "Keats's preoccupation is," in the words of Wellek, "with the poet, his character and function, and not with poetry as structure and meaning,"[18] it follows that poets and their works share identical qualities that constantly point to the mutual interdependence and coalescence of art and life.

The cardinal attributes of a true poet, in Keats's view, are "Negative Capability," empathy ("poetical character"), passionate sensitivity or sentience, imaginative maturity (poetic imagination) and wisdom gained through an intimate understanding of the unity of being in all things in art and life. These attributes translate into specific qualities in great poems because poems mirror the lives of their authors. For instance, a poet's sentience correlates with the intensity in his art which, as has been stated earlier, serves as the link between the artist's life and his works. Keats conceives of the passionate sensitivity of a poet as a way of life, the foundation of knowledge, and the power that resolves apparently contradictory experiences into unity. "O for a life of Sensations rather than Thought,"[19] he declares. The fact that he feels that sensations highlight the aesthetic ideal in the lives and works of poets demonstrates that a life of sensation is not necessarily a life without thoughts; it is a life in which sensations and thoughts are brought into harmony, for these sensations ensure that poetry is an intensity of beauty.

"Negative Capability" is, for Keats, the ability of the poet to be in "uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without irritable reaching after fact or reason."[20] It enables the poet to concentrate on, and explore his subject thoroughly without being forced to fit his findings into a doctrinaire system. The insights that flow from the poet's honest efforts coupled with the distinctive qualities of the subject reveal the beauty of the subject--a beauty which is more important than any metaphysical system. This does not mean that the poet's works lack coherence or some form of system. What it means is that his system is implicit, and broad enough to absorb naturally the numerous elements associated with his exploration of the subject. Shakespeare is Keats's supreme example of a poet who possesses Negative Capability while Coleridge is his example of one who lacks this quality.

A "negatively capable" poet, in his relation to his subject, is to Keats a "poetical character." As a poetical character (that is the poet in his dramatic stance), the poet has great empathic capabilities that he employs in order to partake of the essential being of whatever he depicts in his poems. Keats distinguishes the poetical character from the poet's "poetic self" or ego by its changeability, and maintains that the poetical character can become other things only when it succeeds in suspending the poet's rigid personality or ego. "The poetical character is everything and nothing"[21] because it is changeable. It constrasts with the "poetic self" or the Wordsworthian ego "which is a thing per se and stands alone."[22] The poet, employing his dramatic attributes, is "the most unpoetical thing in existence" because he interacts with his subjects as chameleons and "ethereal Chemicals" do.[23] The changeability of the dramatic personality of the poet is not inconsistent with his personal Identity. In fact, the personal Identity of the poet validates his dramatic personality by providing the measure of self-awareness and knowledge that is necessary to the genuineness of the poetical character's role of "filling some other Bodies."[24]

The poetical character or the "dramatically capable poet," because of his ability to become every subject, can effectively capture the essential beauty in all things. He explores and depicts his subjects in an objective rather than subjective fashion, ensuring that his works are objective portrayals of various subjects and not merely subjective projections of his own ego or rigid convictions. When poetry lacks the objectivity which he associates with the activities of the poetical character, Keats regards such poetry as having "a palpable design upon us"--a kind of poetry that "we hate" because it is "engendered in the whims of an Egotist."[25] He contends that we hate poetry that startles our souls with its technical qualities instead of its subject, and concludes that true poetry "must be great and unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul and does not startle it or amaze it with itself, but with its subject."[26] This kind of poetry which enters into man's soul is what Keats believes flows naturally from the dramatically capable poet, for it is objective depiction, not mere self-expression.

For Keats, the poetic imagination is the propelling force of the poetical character or the poet in general. It is the ideal manifestation of the human imagination--an ideal which is only potentially present in all human beings and thus can only be actualized through the scheme of Soul-making. The poetic imagination "brings the whole soul of man into activity"[27] by synchronizing all man's faculties and obliterating the supposed causes of conflict between sensation and intellection. It is a cognitive and creative power that enables the poet to perceive fully, participate intimately in, and depict or create objectively, the beauty which is the real being in all things. It creates visions that never lapse into mere transcendentalism, and vitalizes actualities without destroying their fundamental qualities.

The poetic imagination's cognitive and creative activities furnish the poet with, as well as aid his poetic dissemination of, the complex knowledge of the world's concord. The complexity of this knowledge, implied in the complexity of the aesthetic ideal, makes the poet a philosopher in the Coleridgean sense of "no man ever [being] a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher."[28] The poet's life and his works are, for Keats, the best manifestations of this philosophic understanding of man and his world. Yet, the poet like his poetry "must be unobtrusive" in expressing this ideal in order to justify Keats's consideration of the poet or his poetry as "the supreme power/ . . . might half slumb'ring on its right arm" ("Sleep and Poetry," 236-7). Power is conferred on true poems and poets by the fact that they express the aesthetic ideal--a power which, though non-assertive and unobtrusive, is nonetheless unmistakable, even in their "mere passive existence."[29]

Poems and poets that possess the qualities discussed so far (of course Keats adds a few others to these qualities) are, in Keats's system, fundamentally useful to man. They are friends that "soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man" ("Sleep and Poetry," 246-7) in a world

> . . .where men sit and hear each other groan;
> Where palsy shakes a few, last gray hairs,
> Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin and dies;
> Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
> And leaden-eyed despairs,
> Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
> Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.
> ("Ode to a Nightingale," III, 4-10)

Poets and their works, as active "friends to man,"[30] are "beautiful things" that serve as "cheering light/Unto our souls, and bind to us so fast/That whether there be shine or gloom o'ercast/They must be with us or we die" (Endymion, I, 30-33). The beauty of poets and poems is not that which invites man to escape into an ideal world that is purged of all tragedies but that which "binds man to the earth"

(Endymion, I, 7). It is therefore neither puerile idealism nor glib justification for suffering in the world; it is an embodiment of the Keatsian vision in which "nothing is seen in isolation . . . the whole is apprehended in the part and everything has a use, a role to play in the totality of human experience."[31]

Keats's concentration on the nature and function of poets and poetry does not, however, mean that he neglects the technical aspects of art. As a remarkable craftsman himself, Keats thinks about, and comments on, the technical or formal part of poetic creativity--albeit many of his ideas on form and technique are implicit in his observations on the nature of poetry and poets. In a broad sense, therefore, his concern for technique centres around the effective use of language in poetry that entails a mastery of diction, idiom, syntax and phonetics. He maintains that conventions relating to the use of language and adoption of forms like the sonnet or couplet must be tested on the pulses of individual poets to determine their relevance to particular subjects. His experiments with the English language which consist of "innovations" and "realignments" of conventions enable him to create "new" words and syntactical patterns that he believes can capture the distinctive textures of experiences in his poems. His theory of the alternation of open and close vowels, his experiments with the sonnet, ode, narrative verse and romance amongst others, and his use of myth, imagery, symbol and metaphor, contain valuable hints about his view of the technical aspects of art. Essentially then, Keats's remarks on artistic techniques, like his general comments on the nature and function of poets and poems, emphasize the ways in which they embody the aesthetic ideal.

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

[1] T. S. Eliot, The Use of Poetry (London, 1933), p. 101.

[2] W. J. Bate ed., Criticism: The Major Texts (New York, 1952), p. 347.

[3] René Wellek, A History of Modern Criticism 1750-1950: The Romantic Age (New Haven, 1955), II, 212.

[4] Hazlitt's ideas have been traced to various sources, including his own contemporaries like Wordsworth and Coleridge. If the existence of these sources does not detract from his originality, then it is obvious that his influence on Keats cannot stifle Keats's original insights. For discussions of Hazlitt's sources see Elisabeth Schneider's The Aesthetics of William Hazlitt (London, 1933), pp. 4, 6 and 84-5; Hersche Sikes's William Hazlitt's Theory of Literary Criticism (New York University Thesis, 1957), pp. 12-17; W. J. Bate ed., Criticism: The Major Texts, p. 281; and René Wellek's A History of Modern Criticism, II, 151-8.

[5] Bertram L. Woodruff, Keats and Hazlitt: A Study in the Development of Keats (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), p. 10.

[6] A detailed analysis of Wordsworth's influence on Keats is given by Thora Balslev in her Keats and Wordsworth (Copenhagen, 1962).

[7] Bertram L. Woodruff, pp. 11 and 15.

[8] See J. M. Murry's useful discussion of Shakespeare's influence on Keats in his Keats and Shakespeare (Oxford, 1969).

[9] J. R. Caldwell, John Keats' Fancy (New York, 1945), p. 17.

[10] Kenneth Muir, "Keats and Hazlitt" in John Keats: A Reassessment, ed. Kenneth Muir (Liverpool, 1969), p. 142.

[11] Ibid., p. 139.

[12] Ibid., p. 142.

[13] A History of Modern Criticism, II, 212.

[14] Mario L. D'Avanzo, Keats's Metaphors for the Poetic Imagination (Durham, N. C., 1967), p. 4.

[15] Leonard M. Trawick ed., Backgrounds of Romanticism: Philosophical Prose of the Eighteenth Century (Bloomington, 1967), pp. XVIII-XIX.

[16] George Brandes, Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature: Naturalism in England (London, MCMVI), IV, 138.

[17] Wallace Stevens, "The Man with the Blue Guitar" in The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens (New York, 1967), p. 176.

[18] Mario L. D'Avanzo, p. IX.

[19] Clarence D. Thorpe, The Mind of John Keats (New York, 1926), p. 26.

[20] A. C. Bradley, Oxford Lectures on Poetry (London, 1965), p. 227.

[21] Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), p. 112.

[22] Cleanth Brooks, The Well Wrought Urn (New York, 1947), p. 140.

[23] Takeshi Saito, Keats' View of Poetry (London, 1929), p. 43.

[24] W. J. Bate, John Keats (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), p. 235.

[25] G. R. Elliott, The Cycle of Modern Poetry (Princeton, 1929), pp. 39-40.

[26] The Use of Poetry, p. 101.

[27] F. R. Leavis, Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry (London, 1936), p. 250.

[28] Hugh I. Fausset, Keats: A Study in Development (London, 1922), p. 5.

[29] S. J. Mary Suddard, Keats, Shelley and Shakespeare (Cambridge, 1912), p. 57.

[30] Hugh I. Fausset, p. 5.

[31] Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry, p. 84.

[32] See Claude Lee Finney's The Evolution of Keats's Poetry (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 2 vols.; Jacob Wigod's The Darkening Chamber (Salzburg, 1972); and W. J. Bate's John Keats, amongst others.

[33] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 143.

[34] H. W. Garrod, Keats (Oxford, 1939), p. 26.

[35] Albert S. Gerard, English Romantic Poetry (Berkeley, 1968), p. 224.

[36] Douglas Bush, "John Keats and his Ideas" in The Major English Romantic Poets, ed. C. D. Thorpe (Carbondale, 1957), p. 233.

[37] See Kenneth Muir's "Keats and Hazlitt" in John Keats: A Reassessment.

[38] J. R. MacGillivray, Keats: A Bibliography and Reference Guide (Toronto, 1949), p. XV.

[39] J. R. Caldwell, p. 4.

[40] Roger Sharrock, "Keats and the Young Lovers," A Review of English Literature, vol. 2, No. 1 (January 1961), 76-86.

[41] John Keats's "Letter to James A. Hessey, October 9, 1818" in The Letters of John Keats, ed. M. B. Forman (London, 1952), I, 242-3. Subsequent references to the letters will be from this edition and will be cited in abridged form.

[42] To Miss Jeffrey, June 9, 1819, Letters, II, 375.

[43] To John Taylor, April 24, 1818, Letters, I, 146.

[44] William Walsh, "John Keats" in The Pelican Guide to English Literature: From Blake to Byron, ed. Boris Ford (Aylesbury, 1957), p. 221.

[45] D. G. James, Scepticism and Poetry (London, 1937), p. 174.

[46] W. H. Garrod, pp. 28-9.

[47] Douglas Bush, "Keats and his Ideas" in The Major English Romantic Poets, p. 234.

[48] To James A. Hessey, October 9, 1818, Letters, I, 242.

[49] Ibid., 242-3.

[50] To J. H. Reynolds, April 9, 1818, Letters, I, 141.

[51] To J. H. Reynolds, April 10, 1818, Letters, 1, 143.

[52] To B. Bailey, May 28, 1818, Letters, I, 160.

[53] Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry, p. 85.

[54] Ibid., p. 126.

[55] Ibid., pp. 126-7.

[56] David Perkins, The Quest for Permanence (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), p. 287.

[57] To George and Georgiana Keats, September 17, 1819, Letters, II, 464.

[58] R. T. Davies, "Some Ideas and Usages" in John Keats: A Reassessment, p. 126.

[59] J. R. Caldwell, p. 7.

[60] Stuart A. Ende, Keats and the Sublime (New Haven, 1976), p. 103.

[61] W. J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats (New York, 1962), pp. 43-4. Also see J. R. Caldwell, p. 7 for a similar view.

[62] Mario L. D'Avanzo, p. 34.

[63] Jack Stillinger, The Hoodwinking of Madeline and other Essays on Keats's Poems (Urbana, 1971), pp. 114-5.

[64] Earl R. Wasserman, The Finer Tone: Keats' Major Poems (Baltimore, 1953), p. 6.

[65] George Brandes, IV, 138.

[66] E. C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats (Cambridge, 1970), p. 42.

[67] Lionel Trilling ed., The Selected Letters of John Keats (New York, 1951), p. 4.

[68] Saito, p. 141.

[69] Ibid., pp. 137 and 140.

[70] To George and Georgiana Keats, Feb.-April, 1819, Letters, II, 362,

[71] Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry, p. 102.

[72] Saito, p. 140.

Chapter I

[1] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 215.

[2] To J. H. Reynolds, April 17, 1817, Letters, I, 21.

[3] C. C. Clarke, "Biographical Notes on Keats" in The Keats Circle, ed. H. E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), II, 149.

[4] G. F. Mathew, "Letter to R. M. Milnes, February 3, 1847" in The Keats Circle, II, 185.

[5] Henry Stephens, "Letter to G. F. Mathew, March 1847" in The Keats Circle, II, 208.

[6] To B. Bailey, August 14, 1819, Letters, II, 400.

[7] Henry Stephens, "Letter to G. F. Mathew, March 1847" in The Keats Circle, II, 208.

[8] Sidney Colvin, Keats (London, 1957), pp. 46-7.

[9] To J. H. Reynolds, April 17, 1817, Letters, I, 21.

[10] To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 261-2.

[11] To Miss Reynolds, Sept. 14, 1817, Letters, I, 46. Also see Endymion, II, 1025f.

[12] A History of Modern Criticism, II, 205.

[13] S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, ed. J. Shawcross (Oxford, 1907), II, 6.

[14] The individual's ability to suspend his selfish interests or ego is what Keats calls "Negative Capability." Negative Capability is an attribute of the poetical character or the Soul's manifestation in the process of artistic experience and creativity--a process which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

[15] F. R. Leavis, Revaluation, p. 262.

[16] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 152.

[17] To John Taylor, April 24, 1818, Letters, I, 146.

[18] Ibid.

[19] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 19, 1819, Letters, II, 343.

[20] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 154.

[21] To J. H. Reynolds, August 25, 1819, Letters, II, 407.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Stuart A. Ende, Keats and the Sublime, p. 90.

[24] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 73.

[25] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 19, 1819, Letters, II, 343.

[26] Stuart Ende, p. 90.

[27] To George and Georgiana Keats, January 13, 1818, Letters, I, 85-6.

[28] M. P. Sherwood, Undercurrents of Influence in Romantic Poetry (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 215 and 263-4.

[29] To J. H. Reynolds, September 21, 1819, Letters, II, 419.

[30] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 154.

[31] Plato, "The Republic: Book X" in Criticism: The Major Statements, ed. Charles Kaplan (New York, 1975), p. 14.

[32] Ibid., p. 13.

[33] Ian Jack, Keats and the Mirror of Art (Oxford, 1967), p. 180.

[34] Ibid., p. 143.

[35] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 288.

[36] W. H. Evert, Aesthetics and Myth in the Poetry of John Keats (Princeton, 1965), pp. 30-87.

[37] Ibid., p. 31.

[38] To J. H. Reynolds, February 19, 1818, Letters, I, 111.

[39] To James Rice, March 24, 1818, Letters, I, 132. Also see "Bards of Passion and of Mirth" (37-40).

[40] Jacob Wigod, The Darkening Chamber, p. 84.

[41] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 153-7.

[42] To J. H. Reynolds, August 25, 1819, Letters, II, 406.

[43] Trilling, p. 10.

[44] To B. Bailey, August 14, 1819, Letters, II, 400.

[45] To George and Georgiana Keats, February 14, 1819, Letters, II, 342.

[46] H. I. Fausset, Keats: A Study in Development, pp. 14-15.

[47] J. M. Murry, Keats and Shakespeare, pp. 46-7.

[48] Hyperion, II, (113).

[49] To B. Bailey, October 8, 1817, Letters, I, 54.

[50] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 71.

[51] Ibid., 72.

[52] To George and Georgiana Keats, February 18, 1819, Letters, II, 327.

[53] To B. Bailey, October 1817, Letters, I, 59. Kenneth Muir feels that this comment is as a result of the fact that Keats is torn between his admiration for Wordsworth and his respect for Hazlitt (John Keats: A Reassessment,

p. 140), while T. S. Eliot considers the comment to be a good example of Keats's penetrative criticism (The Use of Poetry, p. 101).

[54] To Leigh Hunt, May 10, 1817, Letters, I, 26.

[55] M. P. Sherwood, Undercurrents, pp. 215 and 263-4.

[56] To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 250.

[57] Sidney Colvin, Keats, p. 54.

[58] To B. Bailey, March 13, 1818, Letters, I, 121-2.

[59] W. H. Evert, p. 6.

[60] M. A. Goldberg, p. 64.

[61] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 362.

[62] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 155.

[63] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 362.

[64] Ibid., 363.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] To B. Bailey, June 10, 1818, Letters, I, 164.

[69] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 362.

[70] "At Such a Time" (30).

[71] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 361-2.

[72] Ibid., 340.

[73] Ibid.

[74] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 156.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Quoted by Keats from Milton's Paradise Lost, IX (121-2) in a letter to Charles Dilke, September 21, 1818, Letters, I, 237.

[78] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 156.

[79] To J. H. Reynolds, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 69.

[80] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 156.

[81] Ibid.

[82] To B. R. Haydon, May 10, 1817, Letters, I, 31 and 39.

[83] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 362.

[84] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 155.

[85] See Robert Bridges's introduction to Poems of John Keats, ed. G. Thurn Drury (London, 1896), p. XXV.

[86] E. de Selincourt ed., The Poems of John Keats (London, 1905), pp. 406-7; C. L. Finney, The Evolution of Keats's Poetry, I, 397-8; and Thora Balslev, Keats and Wordsworth, pp. 17-19.

[87] There is an obvious example of this tendency in E. de Selincourt's introduction to his edition of Keats's poems, The Poems of John Keats, p. 407.

[88] Thora Balslev, Keats and Wordsworth, p. 17.

[89] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 154.

[90] Ibid., 157.

[91] Ibid., 156.

[92] Ibid., 157.

[93] Ibid.

[94] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 74.

[95] To George and Georgiana Keats, January 13, 1818, Letters, I, 86.

[96] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 340.

[97] To George and Georgiana Keats, September 17, 1819, Letters, II, 466.

[98] Ibid.

[99] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363,

[100] M. A. Goldberg, p. 71.

[101] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 341.

[102] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 341.

[103] Ibid.

[104] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 364.

Chapter II

[1] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 341.

[2] To Richard Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[3] Ibid.

[4] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72.

[5] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[6] Ibid.

[7] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72. Compare the comment with Finney's belief that Keats was stimulated by Hazlitt's ideas to make this distinction, The Evolution of Keats's Poetry, I, 323.

[8] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[9] Ibid.

[10] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 156.

[11] Sigmund Freud, Collected Papers, ed Ernest Jones (New York, 1959), II, Chapter XXI.

[12] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 340.

[13] S. Freud, The Collected Papers, II, Chapter XXI.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Keats regards the Mind and the Heart as vehicles of consciousness in his scheme of Soul-making. See his letter to George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363.

[16] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[17] David Masson, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and other Essays (London, 1875), p. 174.

[18] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[19] To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 248.

[20] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 338.

[21] To C. W. Dilke, September 21, 1818, Letters, I, 148.

[22] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 74.

[23] To J. H. Reynolds, April 27, 1818, Letters, I, 148.

[24] Richard Woodhouse, "Notes on a Letter from Keats" in The Keats Circle, I, 59.

[25] To B. Bailey, June 10, 1818, Letters, I, 164.

[26] To George and Georgiana Keats, September 24, 1819, Letters, II, 466.

[27] To B. Bailey, June 10, 1818, Letters, I, 164.

[28] To Charles Brown, September 28, 1820, Letters, II, 564.

[29] Ibid.

[30] John Keats, "Kean in 'Richard Duke of York,'" The Poetical Works and other Writings, ed. H. Buxton Forman, rev. Maurice Buxton Forman (New York, 1970), V, 239.

[31] D. G. James, The Romantic Comedy (London, 1963), p. 152.

[32] Ibid.

[33] To J. H. Reynolds, August 25, 1819, Letters, II, 407.

[34] R. H. Fogle, "Keats's 'Ode to a Nightingale,'" PMLA, LXVIII (1953), 211-22.

[35] T. Saito, Keats' View of Poetry, p. 45.

[36] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[37] To George and Georgiana Keats, February 1819, Letters, II, 322.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 261-2.

[41] John Keats, The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 229.

[42] Ibid., 231-2.

[43] Bernice Slote, Keats and the Dramatic Principle (Nebraska, 1958), p. 15.

[44] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 77.

[45] C. Finney, I, 241.

[46] Ibid.

[47] To J. H. Reynolds, Feb. 3, 1818, Letters, I, 103.

[48] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 77.

[49] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 249n.

[50] Kenneth Muir, "Keats and Hazlitt" in John Keats: A Reassessment, p. 143.

[51] Quoted in René Wellek's A History of Modern Criticism, II, 163.

[52] Kenneth Muir, p. 143. Claude Finney had earlier expressed the same view in The Evolution of Keats's Poetry, I, 243,

[53] See The Edinburgh Review of August, 1817.

[54] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 15, 1819, Letters, II, 349-350.

[55] See footnote 20 above.

[56] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 157.

[57] John Keats's "Annotations to 'Paradise Lost'" in The Romantics on Milton, ed. J. A. Wittreich, Jr. (London, 1970), p. 554.

[58] To B. Bailey, October 1817, Letters, I, 59.

[59] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[60] Ibid.

[61] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 77.

[62] William Hazlitt, Selected Essays of William Hazlitt, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London, 1934), p. 609.

[63] Ibid., p. 610.

[64] Keats's "Annotations to 'Paradise Lost'" in The Romantics on Milton, p. 553.

[65] William Blake, Complete Writings, ed. G. Keynes (Oxford, 1974), p. 150.

[66] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 77.

[67] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 152.

[68] To B. Bailey, November 27, 1817, Letters, I, 72-3.

[69] The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 230-1.

[70] Ibid., 230.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid., 231. Keats probably derived his idea of gusto from Hazlitt's essay titled "On Gusto," but the application of gusto to Kean's elocution is distinctively Keatsian.

[74] The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 231.

[75] Ibid., 230.

[76] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[77] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 331.

[78] Ibid., 332.

[79] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 77.

[80] To George and Georgiana Keats, March 1819, Letters, II, 342.

[81] To P. B. Shelley, August 1820, Letters, II, 553.

[82] Ibid.

[83] To George and Georgiana Keats, January 13, 1818, Letters, I, 86.

[84] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 156-7.

[85] D. Masson, p. 172.

[86] To J. H. Reynolds, February 3, 1818, Letters, I, 103.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Thora Balslev, Keats and Wordsworth, p. 24.

[89] To J. H. Reynolds, February 3, 1818, Letters, I, 103.

[90] Ibid., 104.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

[94] For some similarities and differences in Keats's and Hazlitt's views on the issue see B. Slote, Keats and the Dramatic Principle, pp. 13-16; Kenneth Muir's "Keats and Hazlitt" in John Keats: A Reassessment, pp. 151-7.

[95] John Keats' Fancy, p. 7.

[96] Benjamin Haydon, Life of Bejamin Haydon, ed. Tom Taylor (London, 1853), II, 8.

[97] Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, Recollections of Writers (New York, 1875), p. 126.

[98] Hoxie N. Fairchild, The Romantic Quest (New York, 1931), p. 310.

[99] W. J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, pp. 43-4.

Chapter III

[1] To J. A. Hessey, October 9, 1818, Letters, I, 243,

[2] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 362-5 and To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 156-8.

[3] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363.

[4] S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II, 12.

[5] Ernest Pereira, "The Poet as a Critic: A Reading of John Keats" in The Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin No. XXIX, ed. Timothy Webb (New York, 1978), p. 16.

[6] J. R. Caldwell, p. 172.

[7] See Jack Stillinger's "Imagination and Reality" in The Hoodwinking of Madeline and other Essays on Keats for a view of Keats's conception of the poetic imagination which tends to support the dubious two-stage theory of Keats's poetic and critical development.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Albert S. Gerard, *English Romantic Poetry*, p. 217.

[10] Ibid.

[11] D. G. James, *Scepticism and Poetry*, p. 172.

[12] See Keats's letter to Richard Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, *Letters*, I, 245, and refer to Chapter II of this study for a detailed discussion of Keats's ideas on the nature and function of the poetical character.

[13] Although he believes in the general Romantic tradition of advocating the freedom of the imagination, Keats insists upon a "natural" regulation of the human imagination through the extensive knowledge derived from intense sensations. His idea of the poetic imagination is that of the ideal manifestion of the human imagination.

[14] Keats does not believe that the principle of consciousness is awakened in the "infant and thoughtless Chamber." Yet, in this chamber, there is a "divine" cognitive power which is analogous to the power Coleridge attributes to his "primary imagination." For Keats, while "Intelligences" may not be "mortally" conscious of their perceptions in this chamber, they nonetheless perceive in a "divine" manner.

[15] Percy B. Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry" in *Criticism: The Major Statements*, p. 355.

[16] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, *Letters*, I, 73.

[17] Ibid.

[18] S. T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, II, 253-5.

[19] Ibid., I, 176.

[20] P. B. Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry" in *Criticism: The Major Statements*, p. 355.

[21] S. T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, II, 254.

[22] These are the two major products of the poetic imagination that Keats identifies and discusses.

[23] Ernest de Selincourt, p. 519.

[24] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, *Letters*, I, 73.

[25] To John Taylor, January 30, 1818, Letters, I, 98.

[26] Ernest de Selincourt, p. 517.

[27] Ibid., p. 519.

[28] See the discussion of this aspect of Negative Capability in Chapter II of this study.

[29] To J. H. Reynolds, Feb. 19, 1818, Letters, I, 111.

[30] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[31] Ibid.

[32] To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 261.

[33] Ibid. 281.

[34] Immanuel Kant, The Philosophy of Kant, ed. and trans. John Watson (Glasgow, 1880), p. 78.

[35] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[36] See S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II, 56 and William Wordsworth's preface to the 1815 volume of the "Lyrical Ballads."

[37] To Miss Jeffrey, May 31, 1819, Letters, II, 373.

[38] To Miss Keats, August 23, 1820, Letters, II, 561.

[39] Keats considers the "sickly imagination" to be unpoetic.

[40] To B. Bailey, July 18, 1818, Letters, I, 208.

[41] To B. R. Haydon, May 10, 1817, Letters, I, 131.

[42] Jack Stillinger erroneously regards the two kinds of imaginative products as mutually exclusive in "Imagination and Reality" in The Hoodwinking of Madeline and other Essays on Keats's Poems.

[43] To B. Bailey, March 13, 1818, Letters, I, 120-1.

[44] Keats's belief in the beneficial effect of great works of art on posterity is discussed in Chapter I.

[45] To B. Bailey, March 13, 1818, Letters, I, 120.

[46] This is reminiscent of George Berkeley's philosophical postulation that the existence of anything depends upon the fact of its being perceived. See "An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision" and "Principles of Human Knowledge" in Berkeley's Philosophical Writings, ed. David Armstrong (London, 1965).

[47] To B. Bailey, March 13, 1818, Letters, I, 121.

[48] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72-3.

[49] "The aesthetic ideal" or the "principle of beauty in all things" is discussed in detail in the next chapter. It is sufficient at this point to know that the aesthetic ideal is coterminous with the profound wisdom which Keats associates with the chamber of Mature-Thought.

[50] To J. H. Reynolds, August 25, 1819, Letters, II, 407.

[51] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[52] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 154.

[53] To J. H. Reynolds, Sept. 21, 1819, Letters, II, 419.

[54] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 74-5.

[55] Lionell Trilling, p. 13.

[56] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[57] William Duff, An Essay on Original Genius (1767). See Backgrounds of Romanticism, p. 118.

[58] Immanuel Kant, The Philosophy of Kant, pp. 77-8.

[59] To J. H. Reynolds, Feb. 19, 1818, Letters, I, 111.

[60] S. T. Coleridge, Shakespearean Criticism, ed T. M. Raysor (London, 1930), II, 148.

[61] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 152.

[62] Ibid.

[63] To B. Bailey, October 8, 1817, Letters, I, 55.

[64] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 357.

[65] S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, I, 193-4.

[66] See Wordsworth's 1815 preface to the "Lyrical Ballads."

[67] S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, I, 202.

[68] This is the central idea informing John Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690).

[69] See David Hartley's Observations on Man (1749).

[70] David Hartley attributes the association of ideas to the nervous system and the brain cells.

[71] Richard H. Fogle, The Imagery of Keats and Shelley (Hamden, 1962), p. 151.

[72] Keats's view is basically in consonance with Coleridge's idea of the "secondary imagination" discussed in Biographia Literaria, and also congruent with Wordsworth's view of the imagination which is related to "metaphoric transfers" in his 1815 preface to the "Lyrical Ballads."

[73] The equation of poetic beauties with harmonic sounds or music, as well as the recognition of the effect of poetic rhythm on the passions, date back to the time of Plato. See Chapter X of Plato's Republic. Also see Keats's statement on the fitting of musical notes to sensations in "To Charles Cowden Clarke" (113).

[74] To B. Bailey, October 8, 1817, Letters, I, 55.

[75] Ibid.

[76] To George and Georgiana Keats, September 1819, Letters, II, 452.

[77] Ibid., and To B. Bailey, Oct. 8, 1817, Letters, I, 55.

[78] William Duff, p. 118.

[79] Ibid., p. 123.

[80] Ibid., 118.

[81] To B. R. Haydon, April 10, 1818, Letters, I, 139.

[82] Claude L. Finney, The Evolution of Keats's Poetry, I, 213.

[83] To C. W. Dilke, September 21, 1818, Letters, I, 236.

[84] William Wordsworth, "Expostulation and Reply."

[85] Plato, Ion in Criticism: The Major Statements, p. 17. It is important to note that there is a marked difference between "inspiration" and "possession" in Plato's works.

[86] Ion, p. 18.

[87] To B. R. Haydon, May 10, 1817, Letters, I, 30.

[88] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[89] See Keats's remarks on "formed," "unformed" and "weak" Identities in letters to George and Georgiana Keats of October, 1818, Letters, I, 248, and of March 17, 1819, Letters, II, 338.

[90] To B. Bailey, March 13, 1818, Letters, I, 120-1.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Recall the earlier distinctions between the "vitalizing" and the "visionary" activities of the poetic imagination.

[93] W. H. Evert, Aesthetic and Myth in the Poetry of Keats, p. 110. The symbolic importance of Endymion has been recognized in criticism since 1880 when F. M. Owen published her John Keats: A Study (London, 1880).

[94] The poet at this stage is a "nascent poet" because he is yet to acquire the knowledge necessary to make him a true poet.

[95] "On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again" (12).

[96] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[97] See Newell F. Ford's The Prefigurative Imagination of John Keats (Stanford, 1951).

[98] See the distinction Keats makes between dreams by mortals and those by immortals in Lamia, I, 127-8.

[99] W. H. Evert, p. 129.

[100] Ibid.

[101] E. C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 171.

[102] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 240.

[103] C. D. Thorpe, The Mind of John Keats, p. 94.

[104] See Jack Stillinger's "Imagination and Reality" in The Hoodwinking of Madeline and other Essays.

[105] E. R. Wasserman, The Finer Tone, p. 15.

Chapter IV

[1] To Miss Fanny Brawne, Feb. 1820, Letters, II, 510.

[2] F. R. Leavis, Revaluation, p. 238.

[3] The Keatsian idea of immortal acts of creation is reminiscent of the Platonic notion of creativity which is all-embracing--regarding all human achievements as resulting from the creativity of man's soul. See Plato's Symposium, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Indianapolis, 1948), p. 46.

[4] To Thomas Keats, June 25, 1818, Letters, I, 170.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] F. R. Leavis, Revalution, p. 239.

[8] William Hazlitt, "Essay on Beauty" in The Collected Works of William Hazlitt, ed. A. R. Waller and Arnold Gloves (London, 1902-6), I, 68.

[9] Plato, Symposium, p. 51.

[10] To George and Georgian Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 261.

[11] See "Tintern Abbey"(93-102) for Wordsworth's idea of the pervading "Presence" which differs from Keats's "Beauty" by having more numinous attributes.

[12] Plato, Symposium, pp. 50-51.

[13] See "Bards of Passion and of Mirth."

[14] Plato, Symposium, pp. 50 and 52.

[15] To Thomas Keats, June 25, 1818, Letters, I, 170.

[16] To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 261.

[17] Plato, Symposium, p. 52.

[18] Ibid.

[19] M. A. Goldberg, p. 77.

[20] To J. H. Reynolds, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 69.

[21] To B. Bailey, March 13, 1818, Letters, I, 120.

[22] In the third chapter of this study, Keats's separation of the poetic from the non-poetic manifestations of the imagination has been discussed in some detail.

[23] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72.

[24] See the two preceeding chapters for discussions of the imaginative powers of the poet.

[25] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72.

[26] The critical debate about whether the last part of this statement comes from the poet or the urn is irrelevant in this context because whether it comes from the poet or urn, the meaning remains unchanged.

[27] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 154.

[28] Quoted from Coleridge's manuscripts by J. H. Muirhead in his book titled Coleridge as a Philosopher (London, 1930), p. 195.

[29] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 517.

[30] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 154.

[31] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72-3.

[32] To George and Georgiana Keats, November 1818, Letters, I, 281.

[33] Arthur Symons, The Romantic Movement in English Literature (London, 1909), p. 303.

[34] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 77.

[35] Arthur Symons, The Romantic Movement in English Literature, p. 306.

[36] F. R. Leavis, Revaluation, p. 257.

[37] Takeshi Saito, Keats' View of Poetry, p. 42.

[38] F. R. Leavis, Revaluation, p. 255.

[39] See G. F. Mathew's letter to R. M. Milnes, February 3, 1847 in The Keats Circle, II, 185 and also Henry Stephens's letter to G. F. Mathew, March 1847 in The Keats Circle, II, 208.

[40] See the proponents of the two-stage developmental theory mentioned in the Introduction of this study.

[41] H. W. Garrod, Keats, p. 42.

[42] Ibid., p. 43.

[43] F. R. Leavis, Revaluation, p. 260.

[44] Douglas Bush, "Keats and his Ideas" in The Major English Romantic Poets, p. 241.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Albert S. Gerard, "Romance and Reality: Continuity and Growth in Keats's View of Art," Keats-Shelley Journal, XI (1962), 17-29.

[47] Jacob Wigod, "Keats's Ideal in the 'Ode on a Grecian Urn,'" PMLA, LXXII (1957), 113-21.

[48] Ronald A. Sharp, Keats, Scepticism, and the Religion of Beauty (Athens, 1979), p. 34.

[50] To J. H. Reynolds, April 17, 1817, Letters, I, 21.

[51] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363.

[52] This is the kind of aestheticism which Jack

Stillinger, for example, attributes to Keats's early poetry and critical views in his The Hoodwinking of Madeline and other Essays on Keats's Poems.

[53] F. R. Leavis, Revaluation, p. 266.

[54] See the following: "To George Felton Mathew" (60), "Ode to Apollo," "Bards of Passion and of Mirth," "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and letters to B. Bailey, November 27 and 5, 1818, Letters, I, 73 and 64.

[55] J. R. Caldwell, John Keats' Fancy, p. 170.

[56] Stillinger's essay, "The Hoodwinking of Madeline," seems more concerned with establishing Madeline's "inadequate" response to her visionary experience than with giving an objective interpretation of the concerns of The Eve of St. Agnes.

[57] That Keats intended his comment to be a criticism of Augustan poetic practices has long been recognized in Keatsian studies. Nevertheless, the comment has a broader significance in the general Keatsian conception of art.

[58] See Chapter II of this study for the discussion of the measure of self-consciousness that Keats advocates in any poetic involvement with the subject of art.

[59] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363.

[60] William Hazlitt, "Miscellaneous Essays on the Fine Arts: The Ideal" in The Collected Works of William Hazlitt, IX, 429.

[61] Keats modifies Byron's maxim in Manfred--"Knowledge is sorrow"--by extending it into "Sorrow is wisdom" and "Wisdom is Folly." See To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 154.

[62] The specific artistic devices which Keats uses in his attempts to capture the beauty of his subjects will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

[63] Earl Wasserman examines how the mind creates essential beauty from all things in The Finer Tone, p. 54ff.

[64] Thora Balslev, Keats and Wordsworth, p. 101.

[65] Jacob Wigod, The Darkening Chamber, p. 112.

[66] See M. P. Sherwood's Undercurrents, p. 260 for a consideration of Oceanus's speech as originating from the theory of evolution which was a common part of the intellectual climate of Keats's time.

[67] For W. H. Evert, Apollo as a symbol of beauty informs only the early poems of Keats. See the first chapter of Evert's Aesthetics and Myth in the Poetry of Keats.

[68] M. A. Goldberg, The Poetics Of Romanticism, p. 119.

[69] As was clearly indicated in the first chapter of this work, Keats's view on the nature and function of art has a direct relevance to his view of life or it focuses on the fact that art has direct applicability to life.

[70] Goldberg wrongly terms Keats's poetical consolation to Bailey as naive. See The Poetics of Romanticism, pp. 63f.

[71] To B. Bailey, November 5, 1817, Letters, I, 64.

[72] To J. H. Reynolds, February 19, 1818, Letters, I, 111.

[73] To John Taylor, February 27, 1818, Letters, I, 116.

[74] Takeshi Saito, Keats' View of Poetry, p. 96.

[75] David Masson, p. 178.

[76] To John Taylor, February 27, 1818, Letters, I, 116.

[77] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 76.

[78] Ibid., 77.

[79] To J. A. Hessey, October 9, 1818, Letters, I, 242.

[80] To J. H. Reynolds, Sept. 22, 1819, Letters, II, 419.

Chapter V

[1] To J. H. Reynolds, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 69.

[2] To B. Bailey, August 14, 1818, Letters, II, 400.

[3] S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II, 253 and 254-5.

[4] To B. Bailey, October 8, 1817, Letters, I, 55.

[5] To P. B. Shelley, August 1820, Letters, II, 553.

[6] To J. H. Reynolds, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 69.

[7] To John Taylor, February 27, 1818, Letters, I, 116.

[8] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 76.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Jan Mukařovský, Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts, trans. Mark E. Suino (Ann Arbor, 1979), p. 35.

[12] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 1818, Letters, I, 271-2.

[13] John Keats, "Marginalia from the Shakespeare Folio" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 270.

[14] To B. R. Haydon, December 23, 1818, Letters, II, 295.

[15] To John Taylor, February 27, 1818, Letters, I, 116.

[16] To J. A. Hessey, October 9, 1818, Letters, I, 243.

[17] John Keats, "On Kean in 'Richard Duke of York'" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 237-8.

[18] John Keats, "Notes on Milton's 'Paradise Lost'" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 297.

[19] To P. B. Shelley, August 1820, Letters, II, 553.

[20] Poetical "luxury" is not necessarily synonymous with sentimentality in the Keatsian system. See Chapter IV of this study.

[21] To P. B. Shelley, August 1820, Letters, II, 553.

[22] "On Kean in 'Richard Duke of York'" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 238.

[23] S. T. Coleridge, Shakespearean Criticism, I, 224.

[24] "On Edmund Kean as a Shakespearean Actor" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 232.

[25] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 76.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Francois Matthey, The Evolution of Keats's Structural Imagery (Zurich, 1974), p. VI.

[29] W. J. Bate, The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 140.

[30] To B. Bailey, August 14, 1819, Letters, II, 400.

[31] The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 44.

[32] To J. H. Reynolds, Sept. 21, 1819, Letters, II, 419.

[33] Jan Mukařovský, "On Poetic Language" in The Word and Verbal Art, trans. and ed. John Burbank and Peter Steiner (New Haven, 1977), p. 8.

[34] William Wordsworth's 1800 "Preface to the 'Lyrical Ballads'" in Criticism: The Major Statements, p. 304.

[35] To J. H. Reynolds, Sept. 21, 1819, Letters, II, 419.

[36] To George and Georgiana Keats, September 1819, Letters, II, 464.

[37] Ibid., and also see To J. H. Reynolds, Sept. 21, 1819, Letters, II, 419.

[38] To George and Georgiana Keats, September 1819, Letters, II, 465.

[39] Aristotle, "The Poetics" in Criticism: The Major Statements, p. 44.

[40] "To Charles Cowden Clark" (38).

[41] To George and Georgiana Keats, September 1819, Letters, II, 465.

[42] To J. H. Reynolds, Sept. 21, 1819, Letters, II, 419.

[43] Ibid.

[44] The Quarterly Review, Vol. XIX, No. XXXVII (1818), 204-8.

[45] W. T. Arnold ed., The Poetical Works of John Keats (London, 1888), pp. XXVI-XLV.

[46] Ibid., p. XLV.

[47] Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, Keats's Shakespeare (London, 1928), p. 229.

[48] To Miss Fanny Brawne, Feb. 1820, Letters, II, 509.

[49] Christopher Ricks, Keats and Embarrassment (Oxford, 1974), pp. 73-4.

[50] Henry J. F. Jones, John Keats's Dream of Truth (New York, 1969), p. 61.

[51] Christopher Ricks, Keats and Embarrassment, p. 74.

[52] "On Edmund Kean as a Shakespearean Actor" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 229.

[53] S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II, 51 and 53.

[54] William Wordsworth, "Preface to the 'Lyrical Ballads'" (1800) in Criticism: The Major Statements, pp. 309 and 314.

[55] Plato, "The Republic: Book X" in Criticism: The Major Statements, p. 14.

[56] "Notes on Milton's 'Paradise Lost' in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 301.

[57] "On Edmund Kean as a Shakespearean Actor" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 230.

[58] E. C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 82.

[59] Letters, I, footnote 2.

[60] The Stylistic Development of Keats, p. 52.

[61] George E. Bateman, A History of English Prosody from the Twelfth Century to the Present Day (New York, 1961), I, 418.

[62] E. C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 81.

[63] Matthew Arnold, Essays in Criticism: Second Series (London, 1888), pp. 119-21. Unfortunately, most Victorians praise Keats's poetry only because of its melody not for its content.

[64] Aileen Ward, John Keats: The Making of a Poet (New York, 1963), p. 414.

[65] E. C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 81.

[66] Letters, I, 117, footnote 2.

[67] W. Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity (London, 1947), p. 12.

[68] E. C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 87.

[69] "On Edmund Kean as a Shakespearean Actor" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 231.

[70] According to H. W. Garrod, Keats composed sonnets on the Petrarchan sonnet model from the beginning of his career to the end of 1817 but in January and February of 1818 he composed on the Shakespearean model, returning to the Petrarchan only twice throughout the rest of his career. See Garrod's Keats, p. 81. Lawrence J. Zillman, in John Keats and the Sonnet Tradition (New York, 1966), disagrees with this point of view.

[71] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 369.

[72] See George Bateman's A History of English Prosody, I, 377-8 for a fairly detailed discussion of the nature of the elegaic stave.

[73] See Garrod's Keats, p. 85ff. for a detailed treatment of Keats's experiments with the Petrarchan and Shakespearean forms of the sonnet.

[74] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 369.

[75] M. R. Ridley, Keats' Craftsmanship (London, 1933), p. 205.

[76] The eighth verse of all the stanzas in the "Ode to a Nightingale" is shorter than all the other verses within the stanzas.

[77] Kenneth Allott, of course, regards the "Ode to Psyche" as the best of Keats's odes on the ground that it is "the most architectural of the odes." See his "The Ode to Psyche" in John Keats: A Reappraisal, p. 75.

[78] H. W. Garrod, Keats, p. 85, and M. R. Ridley, Keats' Craftsmanship, p. 202.

[79] Robin Mayhead, "The Poetry of Tennyson" in The Pelican Guide to English Literature: From Dickens to Hardy, ed. Boris Ford (Aylesbury, 1958), p. 58.

[80] E. C. Pettet, On the Poetry of Keats, p. 88.

[81] "Notes on Milton's 'Paradise Lost'" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 293.

[82] To John Taylor, February 27, 1818, Letters, I, 116.

[83] Aileen Ward, John Keats: The Making of a Poet, p. 414.

[84] "Marginalia from the Shakespearean Folio" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 270.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid.

[87] See Chapter III of this study for a discussion of the imagination's powers of association.

[88] "Notes on Milton's 'Paradise Lost'" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 293.

[89] M. R. Ridley, Keats' Craftsmanship, p. 252.

[90] Ian Jack, Keats and the Mirror of Art (Oxford, 1967), p. 162.

[91] To B. R. Haydon, January 23, 1818, Letters, II, 547-8.

[92] To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818, Letters, I, 261-2.

[93] C. L. Finney, The Evolution of Keats's Poetry, II, 547-8.

[94] For further information on the synaesthetic and kinesthetic imagery of Keats, see T. Saito's Keats' View

of Poetry, pp. 57-8, and R. H. Fogle's The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, pp. 106-110.

Chapter VI

[1] Keats believes that all worthwhile lives are poetic. See Chapter I of this study for a detailed discussion of the Keatsian notion of a poetic life.

[2] Charles C. Clarke, "Biographical Notes on Keats" in The Keats Circle, II, 148.

[3] G. G. Hough, The Romantic Poets (New York, 1964), p. 159. Hunt and Wordsworth also had some influence on Keats's notion of myth.

[4] Charles C. Clarke, "Biographical Notes on Keats" in The Keats Circle, II, 147.

[5] To Miss Fanny Brawne, Feb. 1820, Letters, II, 510.

[6] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 364.

[7] Carl G. Jung, Symbols of Transformation, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York, 1956), pp. 1-3.

[8] Ibid.

[9] H. G. Baynes, Mythology of the Soul: A Research into the Unconscious from Schizophrenic Dreams and Drawings (London, 1940), p. 244.

[10] Ernest Cassirer, Essay on Man (New Haven, 1944), p. 81.

[11] Cleanth Brooks, The Well-Wrought Urn (New York, 1947), p. 152.

[12] To George and Georgiana Keats, February 1819, Letters, II, 327.

[13] Philip Freund, Myths of Creation (New York, 1965), p. 20.

[14] Bernard Blackstone, The Consecrated Urn (London, 1959), p. 17.

[15] Cleanth Brooks, The Well-Wrought Urn, p. 152.

[16] To Miss Fanny Brawne, Feb. 1820, *Letters*, II, 510.

[17] S. T. Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual* (London, 1816), p. 432.

[18] C. M. Bowra, *The Romantic Imagination* (London, 1950), p. 67.

[19] See Chapter IV of this study for a detailed discussion of Keats's notion of eternity.

[20] Dorothy Van Ghent, "Keats's Myth of the Hero," *Keats-Shelley Journal*, Vol. III (1954), 7-25.

[21] S. T. Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, p. 437.

[22] To B. Bailey, March 13, 1818, *Letters*, I, 120-1.

[23] William Wordsworth, "Preface to the 'Lyrical Ballads'" in *Criticism: The Major Statements*, p. 306.

[24] Carl G. Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York, 1960), p. 67.

[25] H. G. Baynes, *Mythology of the Soul*, p. 244.

[26] To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, *Letters*, I, 154.

[27] W. H. Evert, *Aesthetics and Myth in the Poetry of Keats*, p. 22.

[28] Henry Frankfort, *Before Philosophy* (London, 1951), p. 16.

[29] Thora Balslev, *Keats and Wordsworth*, p. 110.

[30] David Perkins, *The Quest for Permanence*, p. 197.

[31] Dorothy Van Ghent, "Keats's Myth of the Hero," *Keats-Shelley Journal*, Vol. III (1954), 7-25.

[32] David Perkins, *The Quest for Permanence*, p. 197.

[33] The simile of life and the scheme of Spirit-creation are fully discussed in Chapters I and III of this study.

[34] E. C. Pettet, *On the Poetry of Keats*, p. 28. Also see H. W. Garrod, *Keats*, p. 28 and T. Saito, *Keats' View of Poetry*, p. 81 for a similar point of view.

[35] See Chapter I of this study.

[36] The poet-hero can be named according to the stage he has attained--Infant-poet (first), Maiden-poet (second) and Mature-poet (third).

[37] David Bidney, "Myth, Symbolism and Truth," Journal of American Folklore, LXVIII (1955), 379-392.

[38] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363.

[39] Erich Neuman, The Origins and History of Consciousness, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York, 1954), p. 266.

[40] See "Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience."

[41] E. Neuman, The Origins and History of Consciousness, p. 266.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Compare the organicism of the personification of the spring and the blue-bells with the rather conventional allusion to the breeze as coming from "the fanning wings of Mercury" ("I Stood Tip-toe," 22-4).

[44] See Carl Jung's Psychological Types: The Psychology of Individuation (London, 1923).

[45] See footnote 36 above.

[46] Erich Neuman, p. 266.

[47] Adapted from Leigh Hunt's praise of Keats. See Hunt's Imagination and Fancy (London, 1883), p. 283.

[48] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[49] Kenneth Allott, "The 'Ode to Psyche'" in John Keats: A Reassessment, p. 87.

[50] The tendency to regard Keats's theory of the natural origin of myths as a re-statement of Wordsworth's probably originates from Leigh Hunt's statement. See C. L. Finney's The Evolution of Keats's Poetry, I, 174.

[51] Bernard Blackstone, The Consecrated Urn, p. 175.

[52] Ibid., pp. 173-7.

[53] "Visionary" in this context means "imaginative" not "escapist."

[54] "Marginalia from the Shakespeare Folio" in The Poetical Works and other Writings, V, 270.

[55] Ibid.

[56] M. P. Sherwood, Undercurrents, p. 210.

[57] Thora Balslev, Keats and Wordsworth, p. 111.

[58] The origin of the myth of Endymion is elaborated in Endymion (I, 591-609; II, 169-174; III, 142-181).

[59] To Miss Fanny Brawne, Feb. 1820, Letters, II, 510.

[60] The direct perception of Cynthia instead of the moon demonstrates the fusion of symbol and what is symbolized.

[61] S. T. Coleridge, The Statesman's Manual, p. 432.

[62] To George and Georgiana Keats, February 1819, Letters, II, 327.

[63] Aileen Ward, John Keats: The Making of a Poet, p. 142.

[64] Keats and the mature poet are identical in this context.

[65] M. P. Sherwood, Undercurrents, p. 211.

[66] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1818, Letters, I, 77.

[67] Each rite represents new knowledge. See Mircea Eliade's discussion of the archetypal rites and their meanings in Images and Symbols, trans. Philip Mariet (London, 1961), pp. 165f.

[68] Kenneth Allott in John Keats: A Reassessment, p. 87.

[69] David Perkins, The Quest for Permanence, p. 198.

[70] K. Muir in John Keats: A Reassessment, p. 104.

[71] David Bidney, 392.

[72] Adaptation of "Great Spirits now on Earth are Sojourning."

[73] See Shelley's "A Defence of Poetry" for a similar notion of the poet.

[74] Dorothy Van Ghent, 7.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid., 15.

[77] See Chapter II of this study.

[78] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 362, and Erich Neuman, p. 266.

[79] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363.

[80] Cleanth Brooks, Modern Poetry and Tradition (Chapel Hill, 1939), p. 31.

[81] Each stage of development entails a different kind of imagination--Infant-imagination (first), Maiden-imagination (second), and Mature-imagination (third).

[82] "The Fall of Hyperion" (175).

[83] Endymion dreams and recreates his dream for up to four times in the first Book. He also loses the dream as many times.

[84] See Joseph Campbell's The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York, 1956).

[85] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72.

[86] Endymion's sojourn in the Latmian environment (Book I), the underworld (Book II), the Sea (Book III), and the air (Book IV) has often been seen as archetypal. Perhaps the initial impetus for archetypal interpretations of Endymion's quest comes from Robert Bridges who in his introduction to The Poems of John Keats (London, 1896), p. XXIII views the quest as taking Endymion through the four basic elements of the universe--earth, fire, water and air.

[87] Clarence Godfrey, "Endymion" in John Keats: A Reassessment, p. 30.

[88] M. P. Sherwood in Undercurrents attributes the Keatsian notion of natural evolution to the influence of Darwin.

[89] D. G. James, The Romantic Comedy, p. 138.

[90] Ibid.

[91] John M. Murry, Keats and Shakespeare, p. 182.

[92] Critics who support the two-stage theory of Keats's development often consider all early references to Apollo as lacking the strength of symbolism that they note in the later references. Note, however, that the early allusions still show that "Apollo is always the most symbolically weighted of all mythological names for Keats"--W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 288.

Conclusion

[1] Ernest Pereira, "The Poet as Critic: A Reading of John Keats" in The Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin Number XXIX, p. 3.

[2] W. J. Bate, John Keats, p. 215.

[3] J. M. Murry, Keats and Shakespeare, p. 46.

[4] Plato, "The Republic: Book X" in Criticism: The Major Statements, p. 15.

[5] J. M. Murry, Keats and Shakespeare, pp. 45 and 46.

[6] To B. Bailey, August 14, 1819, Letters, II, 400; and To George and Georgiana Keats, February 1819, Letters, II, 327.

[7] Lionel Trilling, p. 4.

[8] Plato, Symposium, pp. 50 and 46.

[9] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 363.

[10] To Miss Fanny Brawne, February 1820, Letters, II, 510; To B. Bailey, November 5, 1817, Letters, I, 64; and "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (V, 9).

[11] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 76.

[12] To George and Georgiana Keats, Feb. 1819, Letters, II, 327.

[13] S. T. Coleridge, The Statesman's Manual, p. 437.

[14] To George and Georgiana Keats, April 1819, Letters, II, 362; and To J. H. Reynolds, May 3, 1818, Letters, I, 155.

[15] Henry Stephens, "Letter to G. F. Mathew, March 1847" in The Keats Circle, II, 208.

[16] Ernest Pereira, p. 5.

[17] Although "Soul-making" always implies "poet-making" for Keats, it must be stressed that Keats is conscious of the role of an artist in the restricted sense of a maker of artistic works.

[18] René Wellek, A History of Modern Criticism, II, 214.

[19] To B. Bailey, November 22, 1817, Letters, I, 73.

[20] To George and Georgiana Keats, December 28, 1817, Letters, I, 77.

[21] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., and To B. Bailey, Nov. 22, 1817, Letters, I, 72.

[24] To R. Woodhouse, October 27, 1818, Letters, I, 245.

[25] To J. H. Reynolds, Feb. 3, 1818, Letters, I, 103.

[26] Ibid.

[27] S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II, 12.

[28] Ibid., 19.

[29] To J. H. Reynolds, Feb. 19, 1818, Letters, I, 111.

[30] To James Rice, March 24, 1818, Letters, I, 132.

[31] Bernard Blackstone, The Consecrated Urn, p. 357.

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